

The Damaras have a very odd notion of their origin, thinking that they sprang from a tree, which they call in consequence the Mother Tree. All the animals had the same origin; and, after they had burst from the parent tree, the world was all in darkness. A Damara then lighted a fire, whereupon most of the beasts and birds fled away in terror, while a few remained, and came close to the blaze. Those which fled became wild animals, such as the guoo, the giraffe, the zebra, and others, while those which remained were the sheep, the ox, the goat, and dog, and became domesticated. The individual tree



DAMARA WARRIOR AND WIFE

is said still to exist at a place called Omariera, but, as it happens, every sub-tribe of the Damaras point to a different tree, and regard it with filial affection as their great ancestor.

The natives call this tree Motjohaara, and the particular individual from which they believe that they sprung by the name of Omumborombonga. The timber is very heavy, and of so close and hard a texture, that it may be ranked among the ironwoods.

In appearance the Damaras are a fine race of men, sometimes exceeding six feet in height, and well proportioned. Their features are tolerably regular, and they move with

grace and freedom. They are powerful, as becomes their bulk; but, as is the case with many savages, although they can put forth great strength on occasions, they are not capable of long and continued exertion.

The bodily constitution of the Damaras is of the most extraordinary character. Pain for them seems almost non-existent, and an injury which would be fatal to the more nervously constituted European has but little effect on the Damara. The reader may remember the insensibility to pain manifested by the Hottentots, but the Damaras even exceed them in this particular. Mr. Baines mentions, in his MS. notes, some extraordinary instances of this peculiarity. On one occasion a man had broken his leg, and the fractured limb had been put up in a splint.

One day, while the leg was being dressed, Mr. Baines heard a great shout of laughter, and found that a clumsy assistant had let the leg fall, and had re-broken the partially united bones, so that the leg was hanging with the foot twisted inwards. Instead of being horrified at such an accident, they were all shouting with laughter at the abnormal shape of the limb, and no one seemed to think it a better joke, or laughed more heartily, than the injured man himself. The same man, when his injuries had nearly healed, and nitrate of silver had to be applied freely to the parts, bore the excruciating operation so well that he was complimented on his courage. However, it turned out that he did not feel the application at all, and that the compliments were quite thrown away.

On another occasion, a very remarkable incident occurred. There had been a mutiny, which threatened the lives of the whole party, and the ringleader was accordingly condemned to death, and solemnly executed by being shot through the head with a pistol, the body being allowed to lie where it fell. Two or three days afterwards, the executed criminal made his appearance, not much the worse for the injury, except the remains of a wound in his head. He seemed to think that he had been rather hardly used, and asked for a stick of tobacco as compensation.

Yet, although so indifferent to external injuries, they are singularly sensitive to illness, and are at once prostrated by a slight indisposition, of which an European would think nothing at all.

Their peculiar constitution always shows itself in travelling. Mr. Baines remarks that a savage is ready to travel at a minute's notice, as he has nothing to do but to pick up his weapons and start. He looks with contempt upon the preparation which a white man makes, and for two or three days' "fatigue" work will beat almost any European. Yet in a long, steady march, the European tires out the savage, unless the latter conforms to the usages which he despised at starting.

He finds that, after all, he will require baggage and clothing of some kind. The heat of the mid-day sun gives him a headache, and he is obliged to ask for a cap as a protection. Then his sandals, which were sufficient for him on a sandy soil, are no protection against thorns, and so he has to procure shoes. Then, sleeping at night without a rug or large kaross cannot be endured for many nights, and so he has to ask for a blanket. His food again, such as the ground nuts, on which the poorer Damaras chiefly live, is not sufficiently nutritious for long-continued exertion, and he is obliged to ask for his regular rations. His usual fashion is to make a dash at work, to continue for two or three days, and then to cease altogether, and recruit his strength by passing several days in inaction.

The dress of the Damaras is rather peculiar—that of the women especially so.

The principal part of a man's dress is a leathern rope of wonderful length, seldom less than a hundred feet, and sometimes exceeding four or even five hundred. This is wound in loose coils round the waist, so that it falls in folds which are not devoid of grace. In it the Damara thrusts his axes, knob-kerries, and other implements, so that it serves the purpose of a belt, a pocket, and a dress. His feet are defended by sandals, made something like those of the Bechuanas, and fastened to the feet in a similar manner, but remarkable for their length, projecting rather behind the heel, and very much before the toes, in a way that reminds the observer of the long-toed boots which were so fashionable in early English times. Sometimes he makes a very bad use of these sandals, surreptitiously scraping holes in the sand, into which he pushes small articles of value that may have been dropped, and then stealthily covers them up with the sand.

They are very fond of ornament, and place great value on iron for this purpose, fashioning it into various forms, and polishing it until it glitters brightly in the sunbeams. Beads, of course, they wear, and they are fond of ivory beads, some of which may be rather termed balls, so large are they. One man had a string of these beads which hung from the back of his head nearly to his heels. The uppermost beads were about as large as billiard balls, and they graduated regularly in size until the lowest and smallest were barely as large as hazel-nuts. He was very proud of this ornament, and refused to sell it, though he kindly offered to lend it for a day or two.

His head-dress costs him much trouble in composing, though he does not often go through the labour of adjusting it. He divides his hair into a great number of strands, which he fixes by imbuing them with a mixture of grease and red ochre, and then allows them to hang round his head like so many short red cords. A wealthy man will sometimes adorn himself with a single cockle-shell in the centre of the forehead, and Mr. Baines remarks, that if any of his friends at home would only have made a supper on a few pennyworth of cockles, and sent him the shells, he could have made his fortune. The men have no particular hat or cap; but, as they are very fastidious about their hair, and as rain would utterly destroy all the elaborately-dressed locks, they use in rainy weather a piece of soft hide, which they place on their heads, and fold or twist into any form that may seem most convenient to them. The fat and red ochre, with which he adorns his head is liberally bestowed on the whole body, and affords an index to the health and general spirits of the Damara. When a Damara is well and in good spirits he is all red and shining like a mirror, and whenever he is seen pale and dull he is sure either to be in low spirits or bad circumstances. As a rule, the Damaras do not wash themselves, preferring to renew their beauty by paint and grease, and the natural consequence is, that they diffuse an odour which is far from agreeable to European nostrils, though their own seem to be insensible to it. Indeed, so powerful are the odours of the African tribes, that any one who ventures among them must boldly abnegate the sense of smell, and make up his mind to endure all kinds of evil odours, just as he makes up his mind to endure the heat of the sun and the various hardships of travel in a foreign land.

The dress of the women is most remarkable, not to say unique.



DAMARA GIRL RESTING.

As children, they have no clothing whatever; and, until they are asked in marriage they wear the usual costume of Southern Africa, namely, the fringe-apron, and perhaps a piece of leather tied round the waist, these and beads constituting their only dress.

The illustration on page 341 is from a drawing by Mr. Baines, which admirably shows the symmetrical and graceful figures of the Damara girls before they are married, and their contours spoiled by hard work.

The drawing was taken from life, and represents a young girl as she appears while resting herself. It seems rather a strange mode of resting, but it is a point of honour with the Damara girls and women not to put down a load until they have conveyed it to its destination, and, as she has found the heavy basket to fatigue her head, she has raised it on both her hands, and thus "rests" herself without ceasing her walk or putting down her burden.

Not content with the basket load upon her head, she has another load tied to her back, consisting of some puppies. The Damara girls are very fond of puppies, and make great pets of them, treating them as if they were babies, and carrying them about exactly as the married women carry their children.

As soon as they have been asked in marriage, the Damara woman assumes the matron's distinctive costume. This is of the most elaborate character, and requires a careful description, as there is nothing like it in any part of the world.

Round her waist the woman winds an inordinately long hide rope, like that worn by her husband. This rope is so saturated with grease that it is as soft and pliable as silk, but also has the disadvantage of harbouring sundry noxious insects, the extermination of which, however, seems to afford harmless amusement to the Damara ladies. Also, she wears a dress made of skin, the hair being worn outwards, and the upper part turned over so as to form a sort of cape.

Many Damara women wear a curious kind of bodice, the chief use of which seems to be the evidence that a vast amount of time and labour has been expended in producing a very small result. Small flat discs of ostrich-shell are prepared, as has already been mentioned when treating of the Hottentots, and strung together. A number of the strings are then set side by side so as to form a wide belt, which is fastened round the body, and certainly affords a pleasing contrast to the shining red which is so liberally used, and which entirely obliterates the distinctions of dark or fair individuals.

Round their wrists and ankles they wear a succession of metal rings, almost invariably iron or copper, and some of the richer sort wear so many that they can hardly walk with comfort, and their naturally graceful gait degenerates into an awkward waddle. It is rather curious that the women should value these two metals so highly, for they care comparatively little for the more costly metals, such as brass or even gold. These rings are very simply made, being merely thick rods cut to the proper length, bent rudely into form, and then clenched over the limb by the hammer. These ornaments have cost some of their owners very dear, as we shall presently see.

The strangest part of the woman's costume is the head-dress, which may be seen by reference to the illustration on page 339.

The framework of the head-dress is a skull-cap of stout hide, which fits closely to the head, and which is ornamented with three imitation ears of the same material, one being on each side, and the third behind. To the back of this cap is attached a flat tail, sometimes three feet or more in length, and six or eight inches in width. It is composed of a strip of leather, on which are fastened parallel strings of metal beads, or rather "bugles," mostly made of tin. The last few inches of the leather strip are cut into thongs so as to form a terminal fringe. The cap is further decorated by shells, which are sewn round it in successive rows according to the wealth of the wearer. The whole of the cap, as well as the ears, is rubbed with grease and red ochre.

So much for the cap itself, which, however, is incomplete without the veil. This is a large piece of thin and very soft leather which is attached to the front of the cap, and, if allowed to hang freely, would fall over the face and conceal it. The women, however, only wear it thus for a short time, and then roll it back so that it passes over the forehead, and then falls on either shoulder.

Heavy and inconvenient as is this cap, the Damara woman never goes without it, and suffers all the inconvenience for the sake of being fashionable. Indeed, so highly is this adornment prized by both sexes that the husbands would visit their wives with their heaviest displeasure (*i.e.* beat them within an inch of their lives) if they ventured to appear without it. One woman, whose portrait was being taken, was recommended to leave her head-dress with the artist, so that she might be spared the trouble of standing while the elaborate decorations were being drawn. She was horrified at the idea of laying it aside, and said that her husband would kill her if she was seen without her proper dress. If she wishes to carry a burden on her head, she does not remove her cap, but pushes it off her forehead, so that the three pointed ears come upon the crown instead of the top of the head, and are out of the way.

However scanty may be the apparel which is worn, both sexes are very particular about wearing something, and look upon entire nudity much in the same light that we do. So careful are they in this respect that an unintentional breach of etiquette gave its name to a river. Some Damara women came to it, and, seeing that some berries were growing on the opposite side, and that the water was not much more than waist-deep, they left their aprons on the bank and waded across. While they were engaged in gathering the berries, a torrent of water suddenly swept down the river, overflowed its banks and carried away the dresses. Ever afterwards the Damaras gave that stream the name of Okaroscheké, or "Naked River."

They have a curious custom of chipping the two upper front teeth, so as to leave a V-shaped space between them. This is done with a flint, and the custom prevails, with some modifications, among many other tribes.

It has been mentioned that the Damaras have many cattle. They delight in having droves of one single colour, bright brown being the favourite hue, and cattle of that colour being mostly remarkable for their enduring powers. Damara cattle are much prized by other tribes, and even by the white settlers, on account of their quick step, strong hoofs, and lasting powers. They are, however, rather apt to be wild, and, as their horns are exceedingly long and sharp, an enraged Damara ox becomes a most dangerous animal. Sometimes the horns of an ox will be so long that the tips are seven or eight feet apart. The hair of these cattle is shining and smooth, and the tuft at the end of the tail is nearly as remarkable for its length as the horns. These tail-tufts are much used in decorations, and are in great request for ornamenting the shafts of the assagnis.

As is generally the case with African cattle, the cows give but little milk daily, and if the calf should happen to die, none at all. In such cases, the Damaras stuff the skin of the dead calf with grass, and place it before the cow, who is quite contented with it. Sometimes a rather ludicrous incident has occurred. The cow, while licking her imagined offspring, has come upon the grass which protrudes here and there from the rudely stuffed skin, and, thrusting her nose into the interior, has dragged out and eaten the whole of the grass.

It has been mentioned that the Damaras find much of their subsistence in the ground. They are trained from infancy in digging the ground for food, and little children who cannot fairly walk may be seen crawling about, digging up roots and eating them. By reason of this diet, the figures of the children are anything but graceful, their stomachs protruding in a most absurd manner, and their backs taking a corresponding curve. Their mode of digging holes is called "crowing," and is thus managed: they take a pointed stick in their right hand, break up the ground with it, and scrape out the loose earth with the left. They are wonderfully expeditious at this work, having to employ it for many purposes, such as digging up the ground-nuts, on which they feed largely, excavating for water, and the like. They will sometimes "crow" holes eighteen inches or more in depth, and barely six inches in diameter. The word "crow" is used very frequently by travellers in this part of Africa, and sadly puzzles the novice, who does not in the least know what can be meant by "crowing" for roots, "crow-water," and the like. Crow-water, of course, is that which is obtained by digging holes, and is never so good as that which can be drawn from some open well or stream.

"Crowing" is very useful in house-building. The women procure a number of tolerably stout, but pliant sticks, some eight or nine feet long, and then "crow" a corre-

sponding number of holes in a circle about eight feet in diameter. The sticks are planted in the holes, the tops bent down and lashed together, and the framework of the house is complete. A stout pole, with a forked top, is then set in the middle of the hut, and supports the roof, just as a tent-pole supports the canvass. Brushwood is then woven in and out of the framework, and mud plastered upon the brushwood. A hole is left at the side by way of a door, and another at the top to answer the purpose of a chimney. When the fire is not alight, an old ox-hide is laid over the aperture, and kept in its place by heavy stones. Moreover, as by the heat of the fire inside the hut, and the rays of the sun outside it, various cracks make their appearance in the roof, bides are laid here and there, until at last, an old Damara hut is nearly covered with hides. These act as ventilators during the day, but are carefully drawn and closed at night, the savage, who spends all his day in the open air, almost invariably shutting out every breath of air during the night, and seeming to have the power of existing for six or eight hours without oxygen. As if to increase the chance of suffocation, the Damaras always crowd into these huts, packing themselves as closely as possible round the small fire which occupies the centre.

As to furniture, the Damaras trouble themselves little about such a superfluity. Within the hut may usually be seen one or two clay cooking pots, some wooden vessels, a couple of ox-hides by way of chairs, a small bag of grease, another of red ochre, and an axe for chopping wood. All the remainder of their property is either carried on their persons, or buried in some secret spot so that it may not be stolen.

The intellect of the Damaras does not seem to be of a very high order, or, at all events, it has not been cultivated. They seem to fail most completely in arithmetic, and cannot even count beyond a certain number. Mr. Galton gives a very amusing description of a Damara in difficulties with a question of simple arithmetic.

"We went only three hours, and slept at the furthest watering-place that Hans and I had explored. Now we had to trust to the guides, whose ideas of time and distance were most provokingly indistinct; besides this, they have no comparative in their language, so that you cannot say to them, 'Which is the *longer* of the two, the next stage or the last one?' but you must say, 'The last stage is little; the next, is it great?' the reply is not, it is a 'little longer,' 'much longer,' or 'very much longer,' but simply, 'It is so,' or 'It is not so.' They have a very poor notion of time. If you say, 'Suppose we start at sunrise, where will the sun be when we arrive?' they make the wildest points in the sky, though they are something of astronomers, and give names to several stars. They have no way of distinguishing days, but reckon by the rainy season, the dry season, or the pig-nut season.

"When inquiries are made about how many days' journey off a place may be, their ignorance of all numerical ideas is very annoying. In practice, whatever they may possess in their language, they certainly use no numeral greater than three. When they wish to express four, they take to their fingers, which are to them as formidable instruments of calculation as a sliding rule is to an English school-boy. They puzzle very much after five, because no spare hand remains to grasp and secure the fingers that are required for 'units.' Yet they seldom lose oxen: the way in which they discover the loss of one is not by the number of the herd being diminished, but by the absence of a face they know.

"When bartering is going on, each sheep must be paid for separately. Thus, suppose two sticks of tobacco to be the rate of exchange for one sheep, it would sorely puzzle a Damara to take two sheep and give him four sticks. I have done so, and seen a man first put two of the sticks apart, and take a sight over them at one of the sheep he was about to sell. Having satisfied himself that that one was honestly paid for, and finding to his surprise that exactly two sticks remained in hand to settle the account for the other sheep, he would be afflicted with doubts; the transaction seemed to come out too 'pat' to be correct, and he would refer back to the first couple of sticks; and then his mind got hazy and confused, and wandered from one sheep to the other, and he broke off the transaction until two sticks were put into his hand, and one sheep driven away, and then the other two sticks given him, and the second sheep driven away.

"When a Damara's mind is bent upon number, it is too much occupied to dwell upon quantity; thus a heifer is bought from a man for ten sticks of tobacco, his large hands being both spread out upon the ground, and a stick placed upon each finger. He gathers up the tobacco, the size of the mass pleases him, and the bargain is struck. You then want to buy a second heifer; the same process is gone through, but half sticks instead of whole sticks are put upon his fingers; the man is equally satisfied at the time, but occasionally finds it out, and complains the next day.

"Once, while I watched a Damara floundering hopelessly in a calculation on one side of me, I observed Dinah, my spaniel, equally embarrassed on the other. She was over-looking half a dozen of her new-born puppies, which had been removed two or three times from her, and her anxiety was excessive, as she tried to find out if they were all present, or if any were still missing. She kept puzzling and running her eyes over them backwards and forwards, but could not satisfy herself. She evidently had a vague notion of counting, but the figure was too large for her brain. Taking the two as they stood, dog and Damara, the comparison reflected no great honour on the man.

"Hence, as the Damaras had the vaguest notions of time and distance, and as their language was a poor vehicle for expressing what ideas they had, and lastly, as truth-telling was the exception and not the rule, I found their information to be of very little practical use."

Although the Damaras managed to overrun the country, they cannot be considered a warlike people, neither have they been able to hold for any length of time the very uninviting land they conquered. Their weapons are few and simple, but, such as they are, much pains are taken in their manufacture, and the Damara warrior is as careful to keep his rude arms in good order as is the disciplined soldier of Europe.

The chief and distinctive weapon of the Damara is the assagai, which has little in common with the weapons that have already been described under that name. It is about six feet in length, and has an enormous blade, leaf-shaped, a foot or more in length, and proportionately wide. It is made of soft steel, and can be at once sharpened by scraping with a knife or stone. The shaft is correspondingly stout, and to the centre is attached one of the flowing ox-tails which have already been mentioned. Some of these assagais are made almost wholly of iron, and have only a short piece of wood in the middle, which answers for a handle, as well as an attachment for the ox-tail, which seems to be an essential part of the Damara assagai.

The weapon is, as may be conjectured, an exceedingly inefficient one, and the blade is oftener used as a knife than an offensive weapon. It is certainly useful in the chase of the elephant and other large game, because the wound which it makes is very large, and causes a great flow of blood; but against human enemies it is comparatively useless. The Damara also carries a bow and arrows, which are wretchedly ineffective weapons, the marksman seldom hitting his object at a distance greater than ten or twelve yards. The weapon which he really handles well is the knob-kerry or short club, and this he can use either as a club at short quarters, or as a missile, in the latter case hurling it with a force and precision that renders it really formidable. Still, the Damara's entire armament is a very poor one, and it is not matter of wonder that when he came to match himself against the possessors of fire-arms he should be hopelessly defeated.

In their conflicts with the Hottentots, the unfortunate Damaras suffered dreadfully. They were literally cut to pieces by far inferior forces, not through any particular valour on the part of the enemy, nor from any especial cowardice on their own, but simply because they did not know their own powers. Stalwart warriors, well armed with their broad-bladed assagais, might be seen paralysed with fear at the sound and effects of the muskets with which the Hottentots were armed, and it was no uncommon occurrence for a Damara soldier to stand still in fear and trembling while a little Hottentot, at twenty paces distance, deliberately loaded his weapon, and then shot him down.

Being ignorant of the construction and management of fire-arms, the Damaras had no idea that they were harmless when discharged (for in those days breech-loaders and revolvers were alike unknown to the Hottentots), and therefore allowed themselves to be deliberately shot, while the enemy was really at their mercy.

If the men suffered death in the field, the fate of the women was worse. According to the custom of the Damara tribe, they carried all their wealth on their persons, in the shape of beads, ear-rings, and especially the large and heavy metal rings with which their ankles and wrists were adorned. Whenever the Hottentot soldiers came upon a Damara woman, they always robbed her of every ornament, tearing off all her clothing to search for them, and, as the metal rings could not be unclenched without some trouble, they deliberately cut off the hands and feet of the wretched woman, tore off the rings, and left her to live or die as might happen.

Strangely enough they often lived, even after undergoing such treatment; and, after stanching the flowing blood by thrusting the stumps of their limbs into the hot sand, some of them contrived to crawl for many miles until they rejoined their friends. For some time after the war, maimed Damara women were often seen, some being without feet, others without hands, and some few without either—these having been the richest when assaulted by their cruel enemies.

The Damaras are subdivided into a number of eandas—a word which has some analogy with the Hindoo "caste"—each eanda having its peculiar rites, superstitions, &c. One eanda is called Ovakueyuba, or the Sun-children; another is Ovakuenombura, or the Rain-children; and so on. The eandas have special emblems or crests—if such a word may be used. These emblems are always certain trees or bushes, which represent the eandas just as the red and white roses represented the two great political parties of England. Each of these castes has some prohibited food, and they will almost starve rather than break the law. One eanda will not eat the flesh of red oxen—to another, the draught oxen are prohibited; and so fastidious are they, that they will not touch the vessels in which such food might have been cooked, nor even stand to leeward of the fire, lest the smoke should touch them. These practices cause the Damaras to be very troublesome as guides, and it is not until the leader has steadily refused to humour them that they will consent to forego for the time their antipathies.

This custom is the more extraordinary, as the Damaras are by nature and education anything but fastidious, and they will eat all kinds of food which an European would reject with disgust. They will eat the flesh of cattle or horses which have died of disease, as well as that of the leopard, hyæna, and other beasts of prey.

In spite of their unclean feeding, they will not eat raw, or even underdone meat, and therein are certainly superior to many other tribes, who seem to think that cooking is a needless waste of time and fuel. Goats are, happily for themselves, among the prohibited animals, and are looked upon by the Damaras much as swine are by the Jews.

Fond as they are of beef, they cannot conceive that any one should consider meat as part of his daily food. On special occasions they kill an ox, or, if the giver of the feast should happen to be a rich man, six or seven are killed. But, when an ox is slaughtered, it is almost common property, every one within reach coming for a portion of it, and, if refused, threatening to annihilate the stingy man with their curse. They are horribly afraid of this curse, supposing that their health will be blighted and their strength fade away.

Consequently, meat is of no commercial value in Damara-land, no one caring to possess food which practically belongs to every one except himself. Cows are kept for the sake of their milk, and oxen (as Mr. Galton says) merely to be looked at, just as deer are kept in England, a few being slaughtered on special occasions, but not being intended to furnish a regular supply of food. Much as the Damaras value their oxen when alive—so much so, indeed, that a fine of two oxen is considered a sufficient reparation for murder—they care little for them when dead, a living sheep being far more valuable than a dead ox.

These people know every ox that they have ever seen. Their thoughts run on oxen all day, and cattle form the chief subject of their conversation. Mr. Galton found that, whenever he came to a new station, the natives always inspected his oxen, to see if any of their own missing cattle were among them; and if he had by chance purchased one that had been stolen, its owner would be sure to pick it out, and by the laws of the land is empowered to reclaim it. Knowing this law, he always, if possible, bought his oxen

from men in whose possession they had been for several years, so that no one would be likely to substantiate a claim to any of them.

When the Damaras are at home, they generally amuse themselves in the evening by singing and dancing.

Their music is of a very simple character, their principal, if not only instrument being the bow, the string of which is tightened, and then struck with a stick in a kind of rhythmic manner. The Damara musician thinks that the chief object of his performance



DAMARA DANCE

is to imitate the gallop or trot of the various animals. This he usually does with great skill, the test of an accomplished musician being the imitation of the clumsy canter of the baboon.

Their dances are really remarkable, as may be seen by the following extract from the work of Mr. Baines, who has also kindly supplied the sketch from which the illustration was taken:—

"At night, dances were got up among the Damaras, our attention being first drawn to them by a sound between the barking of a dog and the efforts of a person to clear something out of his throat, by driving the breath strongly through it. We found four men stooping with their heads in contact, vying with each other in the production of these delectable inarticulations, while others, with rattling anklets of hard seed-shells, danced round them.

"By degrees the company gathered together, and the women joined the performers, standing in a semicircle. They sang a monotonous chant, and clapped their hands, while the young men and boys danced up to them, literally, and by no means gently, 'beating the ground with nimble feet,' raising no end of dust, and making their shell anklets sound,

in their opinion, most melodiously. Presently the leader snatched a brand from the fire, and, after dancing up to the women as before, stuck it in the ground as he retired, performing the step round and over it when he returned, like a Highlander in the broadsword dance, without touching it. Then came the return of a victorious party, brandishing their broad spears ornamented with flowing ox-tails, welcomed by a chorus of women, and occasionally driving back the few enemies who had the audacity to approach them.

"This scene, when acted by a sufficient number, must be highly effective. As it was, the glare of the fire reflected from the red helmet-like gear and glittering ornaments of the women, the flashing blades and waving ox-tails of the warriors, with the fitful glare playing on the background of huts, kraal, and groups of cattle, was picturesque enough. The concluding guttural emissions of sound were frightful; the dogs howled simultaneously; and the little lemur, terrified at the uproar, darted wildly about the inside of the wagon, in vain efforts to escape from what, in fact, was his only place of safety."

In Damara-land, the authority of the husband over the wife is not so superior as in other parts of Africa. Of course, he has the advantage of superior strength, and, when angered, will use the stick with tolerable freedom. But, if he should be too liberal with the stick, she has a tacit right of divorce, and betakes herself to some one who will not treat her so harshly. Mr. Galton says that the women whom he saw appeared to have but little affection either for their husbands or children, and that he had always some little difficulty in finding to which man any given wife happened for the time to belong.

The Damara wife costs her husband nothing for her keep, because she "crows" her own ground-nuts, and so he cannot afford to dispense with her services, which are so useful in building his house, cooking his meals, and carrying his goods from place to place. Each wife has her own hut, which of course she builds for herself; and, although polygamy is in vogue, the number of wives is not so great as is the case with other tribes. There is always one chief wife, who takes precedence of the others, and whose eldest son is considered the heir to his father's possessions.

Though the Damaras have no real religion, they have plenty of superstitious practices, one of which bears a striking resemblance to the sacred fire of the ancients. The chief's hut is distinguished by a fire which is always kept burning, outside the hut in fine weather, and inside during rain. To watch this fire is the duty of his daughter, who is a kind of priestess, and is called officially, Ondangere. She performs various rites in virtue of her office; such as sprinkling the cows with water, as they go out to feed; tying a sacred knot in her leathern apron, if one of them dies; and other similar duties.

Should the position of the village be changed, she precedes the oxen, carrying a burning brand from the consecrated fire, and taking care that she replaces it from time to time. If by any chance it should be extinguished, great are the lamentations. The whole tribe are called together, cattle are sacrificed as expiatory offerings, and the fire is re-kindled by friction. If one of the sons, or a chief man, should remove from the spot, and set up a village of his own, he is supplied with some of the sacred fire, and hands it over to his own daughter, who becomes the Ondangere of the new village.

That the Damaras have some hazy notion of the immortality of the soul is evident enough, though they profess not to believe in such a doctrine; for they will sometimes go to the grave of a deceased friend or chief, lay down provisions, ask him to eat, drink, and be merry, and then beg him, in return, to aid them, and grant them herds of cattle and plenty of wives. Moreover, they believe that the dead revisit the earth, though not in the human form: they generally appear in the shape of some animal, but are always distinguished by a mixture of some other animal. For example, if a Damara sees a dog with one foot like that of an ostrich, he knows that he sees an apparition, and is respectful accordingly. If it should follow him, he is dreadfully frightened, knowing that his death is prognosticated thereby. The name of such an apparition is Otj-yuru.

When a Damara chief dies, he is buried in rather a peculiar fashion. As soon as life is extinct—some say, even before the last breath is drawn—the bystanders break the spine by a blow from a large stone. They then unwind the long rope that encircles the loins, and lash the body together in a sitting posture, the head being bent over the knees. Ox-hides are then tied over it, and it is buried with its face to the north, as already

described when treating of the Bechuanas. Cattle are then slaughtered in honour of the dead chief, and over the grave a post is erected, to which the skulls and hair are attached as a trophy. The bow, arrows, assagai, and clubs of the deceased are hung on the same post. Large stones are pressed into the soil above and around the grave; and a large pile of thorns is also heaped over it, in order to keep off the hyenas, who would be sure to dig up and devour the body before the following day. Now and then a chief orders that his body shall be left in his own house, in which case it is laid on an elevated platform, and a strong fence of thorns and stakes built round the hut.

The funeral ceremonies being completed, the new chief forsakes the place, and takes the whole of the people under his command. He remains at a distance for several years, during which time he wears the sign of mourning, *i.e.* a dark-coloured conical cap, and round the neck a thong, to the ends of which are hung two small pieces of ostrich-shell.

When the season of mourning is over, the tribe return, headed by the chief, who goes to the grave of his father, kneels over it, and whispers that he has returned, together with the cattle and wives which his father gave him. He then asks for his parent's aid in all his undertakings, and from that moment takes the place which his father filled before him. Cattle are then slaughtered and a feast held to the memory of the dead chief, and in honour of the living one; and each person present partakes of the meat, which is distributed by the chief himself. The deceased chief symbolically partakes of the banquet. A couple of twigs cut from the tree of the particular *eanda* to which the deceased belonged are considered as his representative, and with this emblem each piece of meat is touched before the guests consume it. In like manner, the first pail of milk that is drawn is taken to the grave, and poured over it.

These ceremonies being rightly performed, the village is built anew, and is always made to resemble that which had been deserted; the huts being built on the same ground, and peculiar care being taken that the fireplaces should occupy exactly the same positions that they did before the tribe went into voluntary exile. The hut of the chief is always upon the east side of the village.

The Damaras have a singular kind of oath, or asseveration—"By the tears of my mother!"—a form of words so poetical and pathetic, that it seems to imply great moral capabilities among a people that could invent and use it.



GRAVE AND MONUMENT OF A DAMARA CHIEF.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE OVAMBO OR OVAMPO TRIBE.

LOCALITY OF THE TRIBE—THEIR HONESTY—KINDNESS TO THE SICK AND AGED—DOMESTIC HABITS—CURIOUS DRESS—THEIR ARCHITECTURE—WOMEN'S WORK—AGRICULTURE—WEAPONS—MODE OF CAMPING—FISH-CATCHING—INGENIOUS TRAPS—ABSENCE OF PAUPERISM—DANCES—GOVERNMENT OF THE OVAMBO—THEIR KING NANGORO—HIS TREACHEROUS CHARACTER—MATRIMONIAL AFFAIRS—THE LAW OF SUCCESSION—THEIR FOOD—CURIOUS CUSTOM AT MEAL-TIMES—MODE OF OREKINO FRIENDS.

THERE is a rather remarkable tribe inhabiting the country about lat. 18° S. and long. 15° E., called by the name of OVAMPO, or OVAMBO, the latter being the usual form. In their own language their name is Ovaherero, or the Merry People.

They are remarkable for their many good qualities, which are almost exceptional in Southern Africa. In the first place, they are honest, and, as we have already seen, honesty is a quality which few of the inhabitants of Southern Africa seem to recognise, much less to practise.

A traveller who finds himself among the Damaras, Namaquas, or Bechuanas must keep a watchful eye on every article which he possesses, and if he leaves any object exposed for a moment, it will probably vanish in some mysterious manner, and never be seen again. Yet Mr. Anderssen, to whom we owe our chief knowledge of the Ovambo tribe, mentions that they were so thoroughly honest that they would not even touch any of his property without permission, much less steal it; and, on one occasion, when his servants happened to leave some trifling articles on the last camping ground, messengers were despatched to him with the missing articles. Among themselves, theft is fully recognised as a crime, and they have arrived at such a pitch of civilization that certain persons are appointed to act as magistrates, and to take cognisance of theft as well as of other crimes. If a man were detected in the act of stealing, he would be brought before the house of the king, and there spared to death.

They are kind and attentive to their sick and aged, and in this respect contrast most favourably with other tribes of Southern Africa. Even the Zulus will desert those who are too old to work, and will leave them to die of hunger, thirst, and privation, whereas the Ovambo takes care of the old, the sick, and the lame, and carefully tends them. This one fact alone is sufficient to place them immeasurably above the neighbouring tribes, and to mark an incalculable advance in moral development.

It is a remarkable fact that the Ovambos do not live in towns or villages, but in separate communities dotted over the land, each family forming a community. The corn and grain, on which they chiefly live, are planted round the houses, which are surrounded with a strong and high inclosure. The natives are obliged to live in this manner on account of the conduct of some neighbouring tribes, which made periodical raids upon them, and inflicted great damage upon their cottages. And, as the Ovambos are a

singularly peaceable tribe, and found that retaliation was not successful, they hit upon this expedient, and formed each homestead into a separate fort.

Probably for the same reason, very few cattle are seen near the habitations of the Ovambos, and a traveller is rather struck with the fact that although this tribe is exceptionally rich in cattle, possessing vast herds of them, a few cows and goats are their only representatives near the houses. The fact is, the herds of cattle are sent away to a distance from the houses, so that they are not only undiscernible by an enemy, but can find plenty of pasturage and water. It is said that they also breed large herds of swine, and have learned the art of fattening them until they attain gigantic dimensions. The



HOUSES.

herds of swine, however, are never allowed to come near the houses, partly for the reasons already given, and partly on account of their mischievous propensities.

The accompanying illustration represents the architecture of the Ovambos. The houses, with their flat, conical roofs, are so low that a man cannot stand upright in them. But the Ovambos never want to stand upright in their houses, thinking them to be merely sleeping-places into which they can crawl, and in which they can be sheltered during the night. Two grain-stores are also seen, each consisting of a huge jar, standing on supports, and covered with a thatch of reeds. In the background is a fowl-house. Poultry are much bred among the Ovambos, and are of a small description, scarcely larger than an English bantam. They are, however, prolific, and lay an abundance of eggs.

The dress of the Ovambos, though scanty, is rather remarkable. As to the men, they generally shave the greater part of the head, but always leave a certain amount of their short, woolly hair upon the crown. As the skull of the Ovambos is rather oddly formed, projecting considerably behind, this fashion gives the whole head a very curious effect. The rest of the man's dress consists chiefly of beads and sandals, the former being principally worn as necklaces, and the latter almost precisely resembling the Bechuanan sandals, which have already been described.

They generally carry a knife with them, stuck into a band tied round the upper part of the arm. The knife bears some resemblance in general make to that of the Bechuanas

and is made by themselves, they being considerable adepts in metallurgy. The bellows employed by the smiths much resembles that which is in use among the Bechuanas, and they contrive to procure a strong and steady blast of wind by fixing two sets of bellows at each forge, and having them worked by two assistants, while the chief smith attends to the metal and wields his stone hammer. The metal, such as iron and copper, which they



OVAMBO GIRLS.

use, they obtain by barter from neighbouring tribes, and work it with such skill that their weapons, axes, and agricultural tools are employed by them as a medium of exchange to the very tribes from whom the ore had been purchased.

The women have a much longer dress than that of the other sex, but it is of rather scanty dimensions. An oddly-shaped apron hangs in front, and another behind, the ordinary form much resembling the head of an axe, with the edge downwards.

The accompanying portrait is taken from a sketch by Mr. Baines, and represents the only true Ovambo that he ever saw. While he was at Otjikango Katiti, or "Little Barman," a Hottentot chief, named Jan Aris, brought out a young Ovambo girl, saying that she was entrusted to him for education. Of course, the real fact was, that she had

been captured in a raid, and was acting as servant to his wife, who was the daughter of the celebrated Jonker, and was pleased to entitle herself the Victoria of Damara-land.

The girl was about fourteen, and was exceedingly timid at the sight of the stranger, turning her back on him, hiding her face, and bursting into tears of fright. This attitude gave an opportunity of sketching a remarkable dress of the Ovambo girl, the rounded piece of hide being decorated with blue beads. When she was persuaded that no harm would be done to her, she turned round and entered into conversation, thereby giving an opportunity for the second sketch. Attached to the same belt which sustains the cushion was a small apron of skin, and besides this no other dress was worn. She was a good-looking girl, and, if her face had not been disfigured by the tribal marks, might have even been considered as pretty.

The head-dress of the women consists chiefly of their own hair, but they continually stiffen it with grease, which they press on the head in cakes, adding a vermilion-coloured clay, and using both substances in such profusion that the top of the head looks quite flat, and much larger than it is by nature. The same mixture of grease and clay is abundantly rubbed over the body so that a woman in full dress imparts a portion of her decorations to every object with which she comes in contact.

Round their waists they wear such masses of beads, shells, and other ornaments, that a solid kind of cuirass is made of them, and the centre of the body is quite covered with these decorations. Many of the women display much taste in the arrangement of the beads and shells, forming them into patterns, and contrasting their various hues in quite an artistic manner. Besides this bead cuirass, they wear a vast number of necklaces and armlets made of the same materials. Their wrists and ankles are loaded with a profusion of huge copper rings, some of which weigh as much as three pounds; and, as a woman will sometimes have two of these rings on each ankle, it may be imagined that the grace of her deportment is not at all increased by them.

Young girls, before they are of sufficient consequence to obtain these ornaments, and while they have to be content with the slight apparel of their sex, are as graceful as needs be, but no woman can be expected to look graceful or to move lightly when she has to carry about with her such an absurd weight of ornaments. Moreover, the daily twelve hours' work of the women tends greatly towards the deterioration of their figures.

To them belongs, as to all other South African women, the labour of building the houses.

The severity of this labour is indeed great, when we take into consideration the dimensions of the enclosures. The houses themselves do not require nearly so much work as those of the Bechuanas, for, although they are of nearly the same dimensions, i.e. from fourteen to twenty feet in diameter, they are comparatively low pitched, and therefore need less material and less labour. A number of these houses are placed in each enclosure, the best being for the master and his immediate family, and the others for the servants. There are besides, grain-stores, houses for cattle, fowl-houses, and even sties for pigs, one or two of the animals being generally kept in each homestead, though the herds are rigidly excluded. Within the same enclosure are often to be seen a number of ordinary Bosjesman huts. These belong to members of that strange tribe, many of whom have taken up their residence with the Ovambos, and live in a kind of relationship with them, partly considered as vassals, partly as servants, and partly as kinsfolk.

Moreover, within the palisade is an open space in which the inhabitants can meet for amusement and consultation, and the cultivated ground is also included, so that the amount of labour expended in making the palisade can easily be imagined. The palisade is composed of poles at least eight feet in length, and of corresponding stoutness, each being a load for an ordinary labourer. These are fixed in the ground at short intervals from each other, and firmly secured by means of rope lashing.

As to the men, they take the lighter departments of field work, attend to the herds of cattle, and go on trading expeditions among the Damaras and other tribes.

The first of these labours is not very severe, as the land is wonderfully fertile. The Ovambos need not the heavy tools which a Kaffir woman is obliged to use, one hoe being a tolerable load. The surface of the ground is a flinty sand soil, but at a short distance

beneath is a layer of blue clay, which appears to be very rich, and to be able to nourish the plants without the aid of manures. A very small hoe is used for agriculture, and instead of digging up the whole surface, the Ovambos merely dig little holes at intervals, drop a handful of corn into them, cover them up, and leave them. This task is always performed at the end of the rainy season, so that the ground is full of moisture, and the young blades soon spring up. They are then thinned out, and planted separately.



WOMEN POUNDING CORN.

When the corn is ripe, the women take possession of it, and the men are free to catch the elephants in pitfalls for the sake of their tusks, and to go on trading expeditions with the ivory thus obtained. When the grain is beaten out of the husks, it is placed in the storehouses, being kept in huge jars made of palm leaves and clay, much resembling those of the Bechuanas, and, like them, raised a foot or so from the ground. Grinding, or rather pounding the grain, also falls to the lot of the women, and is not done with stones, but by means of a rude mortar. A tree-trunk is hollowed out, so as to form a tube, and into this tube the grain is thrown. A stout and heavy pole answers the purpose of a

pestle, and the whole process much resembles that of making butter in the old-fashioned churn.

The illustration on page 354 is from an original sketch by T. Baines, Esq., and exhibits a domestic scene within an Ovambo homestead. Two women are pounding corn in one of their mortars, accompanied by their children. On the face of one of them may be seen a series of tribal marks. These are scars produced by cutting the cheeks and rubbing clay into the wounds, and are thought to be ornamental.

In the foreground lies an oval object pierced with holes. This is a child's toy, made of the fruit of a baobab. Several holes are cut in the rind, and the pulp squeezed out. The hard seeds are allowed to remain within the fruit, and when dry they produce a rattling sound as the child shakes its simple toy. In a note attached to his sketch, Mr. Baines states that this is the only example of a child's toy that he found throughout the whole of Southern Africa. Its existence seems to show the real superiority of this remarkable tribe. In the background are seen a hut and two granaries, and against the house is leaning one of the simple hoes with which the ground is cultivated. The reader will notice that the iron blade is set in a line with the handle, and not at right angles to it. A water-pipe lies on the ground, and the whole is enclosed by the lofty palisades lashed together near the top.

The weapons of the Ovambo tribe are very simple, as it is to be expected from a people who are essentially peaceful and unwarlike. They consist chiefly of an assagai with a large blade, much like that of the Damaras, and quite as useless for warlike purposes, bow and arrows, and the knob-kerry. None of them are very formidable weapons, and the bow and arrows are perhaps the least so of the three, as the Ovambos are wretched marksmen, being infinitely surpassed in the use of the bow by the Damaras and the Bosjesmans, who obtain a kind of skill by using the bow in the chase, though they would be easily beaten in range and aim by a tenth-rate English amateur archer.

When on the march they have a very ingenious mode of encamping. Instead of lighting one large fire and lying round it, as is the usual custom, their first care is to collect a number of stones about as large as bricks, and with these to build a series of circular fireplaces, some two feet in diameter. These fireplaces are arranged in a double row, and between them the travellers make up their primitive couches.

This is a really ingenious plan, and especially suited to the country. In a place where large timber is plentiful, the custom of making huge fires is well enough, though on a cold windy night the traveller is likely to be scorched on one side and frozen on the other. But in Ovambo-land, as a rule, sticks are the usual fuel, and it will be seen that, by the employment of these stones, the heat is not only concentrated but economised, the stones radiating the heat long after the fire has expired. These small fires are even safer than a single large one, for when a large log is burned through and falls, it is apt to scatter burning embers to a considerable distance, some of which might fall on the sleepers and set fire to their beds.

The Ovambos are successful cultivators, and raise vegetables of many kinds. The ordinary Kaffir corn and a kind of millet are the two grains which are most plentiful, and they possess the advantage of having stems some eight feet in length, juicy and sweet. When the corn is reaped, the ears are merely cut off, and the cattle then turned into the field to feed on the sweet stems, which are of a very fattening character.

Beans, peas, and similar vegetables are in great favour with the Ovambos, who also cultivate successfully the melon, pumpkins, calabashes, and other kindred fruits. They also grow tobacco, which, however, is of a very poor quality, not so much on account of the inferior character of the plant, as of the imperfect mode of curing and storing it. Taking the leaves and stalks, and mashing them into a hollow piece of wood is not exactly calculated to improve the flavour of the leaf, and the consequence is, that the tobacco is of such bad quality that no one but an Ovambo will use it.

There is a small tribe of the Ovambos, called the Ovaquangari, inhabiting the banks of the Okovango river, who live much on fish, and have a singularly ingenious mode of capturing them. Mr. Anderssen gives the following account of the fish-traps employed by the Ovaquangari:—"The river Okovango abounds, as I have already said, in fish, and

that in great variety. During my very limited stay on its banks, I collected nearly twenty distinct species, and might, though very inadequately provided with the means of preserving them, unquestionably have doubled them, had sufficient time been afforded me. All I discovered were not only edible, but highly palatable, some of them possessing even an exquisite flavour.

"Many of the natives devote a considerable portion of their time to fishing, and employ various simple, ingenious, and highly effective contrivances for catching the funny tribe. Few fish, however, are caught in the river itself. It is in the numerous shallows and lagoons immediately on its borders, and formed by its annual overflow, that the great draughts are made. The fishing season, indeed, only commences in earnest at about the time that the Okovango reaches its highest water-mark, that is, when it has ceased to ebb, and the temporary lagoons or swamps alluded to begin to disappear.

"To the best of my belief, the Ovaquangari do not employ nets, but traps of various kinds, and what may not inaptly be called aquatic yards, for the capture of fish. These fishing yards are certain spots of eligible water, enclosed or fenced off in the following manner:—A quantity of reeds, of such length as to suit the water for which they are intended, are collected, put into bundles, and cut even at both ends. These reeds are then spread in single layers flat on the ground, and sewn together very much in the same way as ordinary mats, but by a less laborious process. It does not much matter what the length of these mats may be, as they can be easily lengthened or shortened as need may require.

"When a locality has been decided on for fishing operations, a certain number of these mattings are introduced into the water on their ends, that is, in a vertical position, and are placed either in a circle, semicircle, or a line, according to the shape of the lagoon or shallow which is to be enclosed. Open spaces, from three to four feet wide, are, however, left at certain intervals, and into these apertures the toils, consisting of beehive-shaped masses of reeds, are introduced. The diameter of these at the mouth varies with the depth to which they have to descend, the lower side being firmly fastened to the bottom of the water, whilst the upper is usually on a level with its surface, or slightly rising above it. In order thoroughly to disguise these ingenious traps, grasses and weeds are thrown carelessly over and around them."

The Ovambos are fond of amusing themselves with a dance, which seems to be exceedingly agreeable to the performers, but which could not be engaged in by those who were not well practised in its odd evolutions. The dancers are all men, and stand in a double row, back to back. The music, consisting of a drum and a kind of guitar, then strikes up, and the performers begin to move from side to side, so as to pass and repass each other. Suddenly, one of the performers spins round, and delivers a tremendous kick at the individual who happens then to be in front of him; and the gist of the dance consists in planting your own kick and avoiding that of others. This dance takes place in the evening, and is lighted by torches made simply of dried palm branches. Nangoro used to give a dance every evening in his palace yard, which was a most intricate building, a hundred yards or so in diameter, and a very labyrinth of paths leading to dancing-floors, threshing-floors, corn-stores, women's apartments, and the like.

Among the Ovambos there is no pauperism. This may not seem to be an astonishing fact to those who entertain the popular idea of savage life, namely, that with them there is no distinction of rich and poor, master and servant. But, in fact, the distinctions of rank and wealth are nowhere more sharply defined than among savages. The king or chief is approached with a ceremony which almost amounts to worship; the superior exacts homage, and the inferior pays it. Wealth is as much sought after among savages as among Europeans, and a rich man is quite as much respected on account of his wealth as if he had lived in Europe all his life. The poor become servants to the rich, and, practically, are their slaves, being looked down upon with supreme contempt. Pauperism is as common in Africa as it is in Europe, and it is a matter of great credit to the Ovambos that it is not to be found among them.

The Ovambos are ruled by a king, and entertain great contempt for all the tribes who do not enjoy that privilege. They acknowledge petty chiefs, each head of a family taking rank as such, but prefer monarchy to any other form of government. As is the

case with many other tribes, the king becomes enormously fat, and is generally the only obese man in the country. Nangoro, who was king some few years ago, was especially remarkable for his enormous dimensions, wherein he even exceeded Panda, the Kaffir monarch. He was so fat that his gait was reduced to a mere waddle, and his breath was so short that he was obliged to halt at every few paces, and could not speak two consecutive sentences without suffering great inconvenience, so that in ordinary conversation his part mostly consisted of monosyllabic grunts.

His character was as much in contrast to those of his subjects as was his person. He was a very unpleasant individual,—selfish, cunning, and heartless. After witnessing the effect of the firearms used by his white visitors, he asked them to prove their weapons by shooting elephants. Had they fallen into the trap which was laid for them, he would have delayed their departure by all kinds of quibbles, kept up the work of elephant-shooting, and have taken all the ivory himself.

After they had left his country, Nangoro despatched a body of men after them, with orders to kill them all. The commander of the party, however, took a dislike to his mission—probably from having witnessed the effect of conical bullets when fired by the white men—and took his men home again. One party, however, was less fortunate, and a fight ensued. Mr. Green and some friends visited Nangoro, and were received very hospitably. But, just before they were about to leave the district, they were suddenly attacked by a strong force of the Ovambos, some six hundred in number, all well armed with their native weapons, the bow, the knob-kerry, and the assagai, while the armed Europeans were only thirteen in number.

Fortunately, the attack was not entirely unsuspected, as sundry little events had happened which put the travellers on their guard. The conflict was very severe, and in the end the Ovambos were completely defeated, having many killed and wounded, and among the former one of Nangoro's sons. The Europeans, on the contrary, only lost one man, a native attendant, who was treacherously stabbed before the fight began. The most remarkable part of this fight was, that it caused the death of the treacherous king, who was present at the battle. Although he had seen firearms used, he had a poor opinion of their power, and had, moreover, only seen occasional shots fired at a mark. The repeated discharges that stunned his ears, and the sight of his men falling dead and dying about him, terrified him so exceedingly that he died on the spot from sheer fright.

The private character of this cowardly traitor was by no means a pleasant one, and he had a petty way of revenging himself for any fancied slight. On one occasion, when some native beer was offered to Mr. Andersen, and declined in consequence of an attack of illness, Nangoro, who was sitting in front of the traveller, suddenly thrust at him violently with his sceptre, and caused great pain. This he passed off as a practical joke, though, as the sceptre was simply a pointed stick, the joke was anything but agreeable to its victim. The real reason for this sudden assault was, that Mr. Andersen had refused to grant the king some request which he had made.

He became jealous and sulky, and took a contemptible pleasure in thwarting his white visitors in every way. Their refusal to shoot elephants, and to undergo all the dangers of the hunt, while he was to have all the profits, was a never-failing source of anger, and served as an excuse for refusing all accommodation. They could not even go half-a-mile out of camp without first obtaining permission, and when they asked for guides to direct them on their journey, he refused, saying that those who would not shoot elephants for him should have no guides from him. In fine, he kept them in his country until he had exacted from them everything which they could give him, and, by way of royal remuneration for their gifts, once sent them a small basket of flour. He was then glad to get rid of them, evidently fearing that he should have to feed them, and by way of extraordinary generosity, expedited their departure with a present of corn, not from his own stores, but from those of his subjects, and which, moreover, arrived too late. His treacherous conduct in sending after the European party, and the failure of his plans, have already been mentioned.

The Ovambo tribe are allowed to have as many wives as they please, provided that they can be purchased at the ordinary price. This price differs, not so much from the

charms or accomplishments of the bride, as from the wealth of the suitor. The price of wives is much lower than among the Kaffirs, two oxen and one cow being considered the ordinary sum which a man in humble circumstances is expected to pay, while a man of some wealth cannot purchase a wife under three oxen and two cows. The only exception to this rule is afforded by the king himself, who takes as many wives as he pleases without paying for them, the honour of his alliance being considered a sufficient remuneration. One wife always takes the chief place, and the successor to the rank and property of his father is always one of her children. The law of royal succession is very simple. When the king dies, the eldest son of his chief wife succeeds him, but if she has no son, then the daughter assumes the sceptre. This was the case with the fat king, Nangoro, whose daughter Chipanga was the heir apparent, and afterwards succeeded him.

It is, however, very difficult to give precise information on so delicate a subject. The Ovambo tribe cannot endure to speak, or even to think, of the state of uau after death, and merely to allude to the successor of a chief gives dire offence, as the mention of an heir to property, or a successor to rank, implies the death of the present chief. For the same reason, it is most difficult to extract any information from them respecting their ideas of religion, and any questions upon the subject are instantly checked.

That they have some notions of religion is evident enough, though they degrade it into mere superstition. Charms of various kinds they value exceedingly, though they seem to be regarded more as safeguards against injury from man or beast than as possessing any sanctity of their own. Still, the constitutional reticence of the Ovambo tribe on such subjects may cause them to deny such sanctity to others, though they acknowledge it among themselves.

As is the case with many of the South African tribes, the Ovambos make great use of a kind of coarse porridge. They always eat it hot, and mix with it a quantity of clotted milk or semi-liquid butter. They are quite independent of spoons at their meals, and, in spite of the nature of their food, do not even use the brush-spoon that is employed by the Hottentots.

Mr. Anderssen, while travelling in the land of the Ovambos, was hospitably received at a house, and invited to dinner. No spoons were provided, and he did not see how he was to eat porridge and milk without such aid. "On seeing the dilemma we were in, our host quickly plunged his greasy fingers into the middle of the steaming mass, and brought out a handful, which he dashed into the milk. Having stirred it quickly round with all his might, he next opened his capacious mouth, in which the agreeable mixture vanished as if by magic. He finally licked his fingers, and smacked his lips with evident satisfaction, looking at us as much as to say, 'That's the trick, my boys!'

"However unpleasant this initiation might have appeared to us, it would have been ungrateful, if not offensive, to refuse. Therefore we commenced in earnest, according to example, emptying the dish, and occasionally burning our fingers, to the great amusement of our swarthy friends."

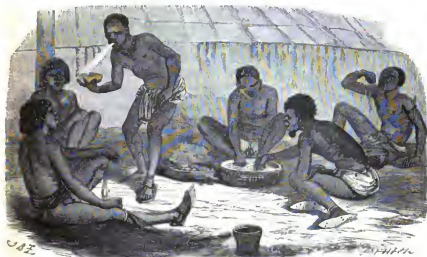
On one occasion, the same traveller, who was accompanied by some Damaras, fell in with a party of the Ovambos, who gave them a quantity of porridge meal of millet in exchange for meat. Both parties were equally pleased, the one having had no animal food for a long time, and the other having lived on flesh diet until they were thoroughly tired of it. A great feast was the immediate result, the Ovambos revelling in the unwonted luxury of meat, and the Europeans and Damaras only too glad to obtain some vegetable food.

The feast resembled all others, except that a singular ceremony was insisted upon by the one party, and submitted to by the other. The Damaras had a fair share of the banquet, but, before they were allowed to begin their meal, one of the Ovambos went round to them, and, after filling his mouth with water, spirted a little of the liquid into their faces.

This extraordinary ceremony was invented by the king Nangoro when he was a young man. Among their other superstitions, the Ovambos have an idea that a man is peculiarly susceptible to witchcraft at meal times, and that it is possible for a wizard to charm away the life of any one with whom he may happen to eat. Consequently, all kinds of

counter-charms are employed, and as the one in question was invented by the king, it was soon adopted by his loyal subjects, and became fashionable throughout the land. So wedded to this charm was Nangoro himself, that when Mr. Galton first visited him he was equally alarmed and amazed at the refusal of the white man to submit to the aspersion. At last he agreed to compromise the matter by anointing his visitor's head with butter, but, as soon as beer was produced, he again became suspicious, and would not partake of it, nor even remain in the house while it was being drunk.

He would not even have consented to the partial compromise, but for a happy idea that white men were exceptional beings, not subject to the ordinary laws of Nature. That there was a country where they were the lords of the soil he flatly refused to believe, but, as Mr. Galton remarks, considered them simply as rare migratory animals of considerable intelligence.



OVAMBO DINNER-PARTY.

It is a rather curious fact that, although the Damaras are known never to take salt with their food, the Ovambos invariably make use of that condiment.

They have a rather odd fashion of greeting their friends. As soon as their guests are seated, a large dish of fresh butter is produced, and the host or the chief man present rubs the face and breast of each guest with the butter. They seem to enjoy this process thoroughly, and cannot understand why their white guests should object to a ceremony which is so pleasing to themselves. Perhaps this custom may have some analogy with their mode of treating the Damaras at meal-times. The Ovambos still retain a ceremony which is precisely similar to one which prevails through the greater part of the East. If a subject should come into the presence of his king, if a common man should appear before his chief, he takes off his sandals before presuming to make his obeisance.

The reader may remember that on page 348, certain observances connected with fire are in use among the Damaras. The Ovambo tribe have a somewhat similar idea on the subject, for when Mr. Anderssen went to visit Nangoro, the king of the Ovambos, a messenger was sent from the king bearing a brand kindled at the royal fire. He first extinguished the fire that was already burning, and then re-kindled it with the glowing brand, so that the king and his visitor were supposed to be warmed by the same fire. In this ceremony there is a delicate courtesy, not unmingled with poetical feeling.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE MAKOLOLO TRIBE.

RISE AND FALL OF AFRICAN TRIBES—ORIGIN OF THE MAKOLOLO TRIBE—ORGANIZATION BY SEBITUANE—INCAPACITY OF HIS SUCCESSOR, SEKELETU—MODE OF GOVERNMENT—APPEARANCE OF THE MAKOLOLO—THEIR GENERAL CHARACTER—HONESTY—GRACEFUL MODE OF MAKING PRESENTS—MODE OF SALUTATION—FOOD AND COOKING—A MAKOLOLO FEAST—ETIQUETTE AT MEALS—MANAGEMENT OF CANOES—THE WOMEN, THEIR DRESS AND MANNERS—THEIR COLOUR—EASY LIFE LED BY THEM—HOUSE-BUILDING—CURIOUS MODE OF RAISING THE ROOF—HOW TO HOUSE A VISITOR—LAW-SUITS AND SPECIAL PLEADING—GAME LAWS—CHILDREN'S GAMES—A MAKOLOLO VILLAGE—M'BOPO AT HOME—TOBY FILLPOT—MAKOLOLO SONGS AND DANCES—HEMP-SMOKING, AND ITS DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS—TREATMENT OF THE SICK, AND BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

IN the whole of Africa south of the equator, we find the great events of the civilized world repeated on a smaller scale. Civilized history speaks of the origin and rise of nations, and the decadence and fall of empires. During a course of many centuries, dynasties have arisen and held their sway for generations, fading away by degrees before the influx of mightier races. The kingdoms of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome, Persia, and the like, have lasted from generation after generation, and some of them still exist, though with diminished powers. The Pharaohs have passed from the face of the earth, and their metropolis is a desert; but Athens and Rome still retain some traces of their vanished glories.

In Southern Africa, however, the changes that take place, though precisely similar in principle, are on a much smaller scale, both of magnitude and duration, and a traveller who passes a few years in the country may see four or five changes of dynasty in a few years. Within the space of an ordinary life-time, for example, the fiery genius of Tchaka gathered a number of scattered tribes into a nation, and created a dynasty, which, when deprived of its leading spirit, fell into decline, and has yearly tended to return to the original elements of which it was composed. Then the Hottentots have come from some unknown country, and dispossessed the aborigines of the Cape so completely that no one knows what those aborigines were. In the case of islands, such as the Polynesian group, or even the vast island of Australia, we know what the aborigines must have been; but we have no such knowledge with regard to Southern Africa, and in consequence the extent of our knowledge is, that the aborigines, whoever they might have been, were certainly not Hottentots. Then the Kaffirs swept down and ejected the Hottentots, and the Dutch and other white colonists ejected the Kaffirs.

So it has been with the tribe of the Makololo, which, though thinly scattered, and by no means condensed, has contrived to possess a large portion of Southern Africa. Deriving their primary origin from a branch of the great Bechuana tribe, and therefore retaining many of the customs of that tribe together with its skill in manufactures, they

were able to extend themselves far from their original home, and by degrees contrived to gain the dominion over the greater part of the country as far as lat. 14° S. Yet, in 1861, when Dr. Livingstone passed through the country of the Makololo, he saw symptoms of its decadence.

They had been organized by a great and wise chief named Sebituane, who carried out to the fullest extent the old Roman principle of mercy to the submissive, and war to the proud.

Sebituane owed much of his success to his practice of leading his troops to battle in person. When he came within sight of the enemy, he significantly felt the edge of his battle-axe, and said, "Aha! it is sharp, and whoever turns his back on the enemy will feel its edge." Being remarkably fleet of foot, none of his soldiers could escape from him, and they found that it was far safer to fling themselves on the enemy with the chance of repelling him, than run away with the certainty of being cut down by the chief's battle-axe. Sometimes a cowardly soldier skulked, or hid himself. Sebituane, however, was not to be deceived, and, after allowing him to return home, he would send for the delinquent, and after mockingly assuming that death at home was preferable to death on the field of battle, would order him to instant execution.

He incorporated the conquered tribes with his own Makololo, saying that, when they submitted to his rule, they were all children of the chief, and therefore equal; and he proved his words by admitting them to participate in the highest honours, and causing them to intermarry with his own tribe. Under him was an organized system of head chiefs, and petty chiefs and elders, through whom Sebituane knew all the affairs of his kingdom, and guided it well and wisely.

But, when he died, the band that held together this nation was loosened, and bid fair to give way altogether. His son and successor, Sekeletu, was incapable of following the example of his father. He allowed the prejudices of race to be again developed, and fostered them himself by studiously excluding all women except the Makololo from his harem, and appointing none but Makololo men to office.

Consequently, he became exceedingly unpopular among those very tribes whom his father had succeeded in conciliating, and, as a natural consequence, his chiefs and elders being all Makololo men, they could not enjoy the confidence of the incorporated tribes, and thus the harmonious system of Sebituane was broken up. Without confidence in their rulers, a people cannot retain their position as a great nation; and Sekeletu, in forfeiting that confidence, sapped with his own hands the foundation of his throne. Discontent began to show itself, and his people drew unfavourable contrasts between his rule and that of his father, some even doubting whether so weak and purposeless a man could really be the son of their lamented chief, the "Great Lion," as they called him.

"In his days," said they, "we had great chiefs, and little chiefs, and elders, to carry on the government, and the great chief, Sebituane, knew them all, and the whole country was wisely ruled. But now Sekeletu knows nothing of what his underlings do, and they care not for him, and the Makololo power is fast passing away."

Then Sekeletu fell ill of a horrible and disfiguring disease, shut himself up in his house, and would not show himself; allowing no one to come near him but one favourite, through whom his orders were transmitted to the people. But the nation got tired of being ruled by deputy, and consequently a number of conspiracies were organized, which never could have been done under the all-pervading rule of Sebituane, and several of the greater chiefs boldly set their king at defiance. As long as Sekeletu lived, the kingdom retained a nominal, though not a real existence, but within a year after his death, which occurred in 1864, civil wars sprang up on every side; the kingdom thus divided was weakened, and unable to resist the incursions of surrounding tribes, and thus, within the space of a very few years, the great Makololo empire fell to pieces.

According to Dr. Livingstone, this event was much to be regretted, because the Makololo were not slave-dealers, whereas the tribes which eventually took possession of their land were so; and, as their sway extended over so large a territory, it was a great boon that the abominable slave traffic was not permitted to exist.

Mr. Baines, who knew both the father and the son, has the very meanest opinion of the latter, and the highest of the former. In his notes, which he has kindly placed at my disposal, he briefly characterizes them as follows:—"Sebituane, a polished, merciful man. Sekeletu, his successor, a fast young snob, with no judgment. Killed off his father's councillors, and did as he liked. Helped the missionaries to die rather than live, even if he did not intentionally poison them—then plundered their provision stores."

The true Makololo are a fine race of men, and are lighter in colour than the surrounding tribes, being of a rich warm brown, rather than black, and they are rather peculiar in their intonation, pronouncing each syllable slowly and deliberately.

The general character of this people seems to be a high one, and in many respects will bear comparison with the Ovambo. Brave they have proved themselves by their many victories, though it is rather remarkable that they do not display the same courage when opposed to the lion as when engaged in warfare against their fellow-men.

Yet they are not without courage and presence of mind in the hunting-field, though the dread king of beasts seems to exercise such an influence over them that they fear to resist his incursions. The buffalo is really quite as much to be dreaded as the lion, and yet the Makololo are comparatively indifferent when pursuing it. The animal has an unpleasant habit of doubling back on its trail, crouching in the bush, allowing the hunters to pass its hiding-place, and then to charge suddenly at them with such a force and fury that it scatters the bushes before its headlong rush like autumn leaves before the wind. Yet the Makololo hunters are not in the least afraid of this most formidable animal, but leap behind a tree as it charges, and then hurl their spears as it passes them.

Hospitality is one of their chief virtues, and it is exercised with a modesty which is rather remarkable. "The people of every village," writes Livingstone, "treated us most liberally, presenting, besides oxen, butter, milk, and meal, more than we could stow away in our canoes. The cows in this valley are now yielding, as they frequently do, more milk than the people can use, and both men and women present butter in such quantities, that I shall be able to refresh my men as we go along. Anointing the skin prevents the excessive evaporation of the fluids of the body, and acts as clothing in both sun and shade.

"They always made their presents gracefully. When an ox was given, the owner would say, 'Here is a little bit of bread for you.' This was pleasing, for I had been accustomed to the Bechuanas presenting a miserable goat, with the pompous exclamation, 'Behold, an ox!' The women persisted in giving me copious supplies of shrill praises, or 'lullilooing,' but although I frequently told them to modify their 'Great Lords,' and 'Great Lions,' to more humble expressions, they so evidently intended to do me honour, that I could not help being pleased with the poor creatures' wishes for our success."

One remarkable instance of the honesty of this tribe is afforded by Dr. Livingstone. In 1853, he had left at Linyanti, a place on the Zambesi river, a wagon containing papers and stores. He had been away from Linyanti, to which place he found that letters and packages had been sent for him. Accordingly, in 1860, he determined on revisiting the spot, and when he arrived there, found that everything in the wagon was exactly in the same state as when he left it in charge of the king seven years before. The head men of the place were very glad to see him back again, and only lamented that he had not arrived in the previous year, which happened to be one of special plenty.

This honesty is the more remarkable, because they had good reason to fear the attacks of the Matabele, who, if they had heard that a wagon with property in it was kept in the place, would have attacked Linyanti at once, in spite of its strong position amid rivers and marshes. However, the Makololo men agreed that in that case they were to fight in defence of the wagon and that the first man who wounded a Matabele in defence of the wagon was to receive cattle as a reward.

It is probable, however, that the great personal influence which Dr. Livingstone exercised over the king and his tribe had much to do with the behaviour of these Makololo, and that a man of less capacity and experience would have been robbed of everything that could be stolen.

When natives travel, especially if they should be headed by a chief, similar ceremonies take place, the women being entrusted with the task of welcoming the visitors. This they do by means of a shrill, prolonged, undulating cry, produced by a rapid agitation of the tongue, and expressively called "lullilooing." The men follow their example, and it is etiquette for the chief to receive all these salutations with perfect indifference. As soon as the new comers are seated, a conversation takes place, in which the two parties exchange news, and then the head man rises and brings out a quantity of beer in large pots. Calabash goblets are handed round, and every one makes it a point of honour to drink as fast as he can, the fragile goblets being often broken in this convivial rivalry.

Besides the beer, jars of clotted milk are produced in plenty, and each of the jars is given to one of the principal men, who is at liberty to divide it as he chooses. Although originally sprung from the Bechuanas, the Makololo disdain the use of spoons, preferring to scoop up the milk in their hands, and, if a spoon be given to them, they merely ladle out some milk from the jar, put it into their hands, and so eat it. A chief is expected to give several feasts of meat to his followers. He chooses an ox, and hands it over to some favoured individual, who proceeds to kill it by piercing its heart with a slender spear. The wound is carefully closed, so that the animal bleeds internally, the whole of the blood, as well as the viscera, forming the perquisite of the butcher.

Scarcely is the ox dead than it is cut up, the best parts, namely, the hump and ribs belonging to the chief, who also apportions the different parts of the slain animal among his guests, just as Joseph did with his brethren, each of the honoured guests subdividing his own portion among his immediate followers. The process of cooking is simple enough, the meat being merely cut into strips and thrown on the fire, often in such quantities that it is nearly extinguished. Before it is half cooked, it is taken from the embers, and eaten while so hot that none but a practised meat-eater could endure it, the chief object being to introduce as much meat as possible into the stomach in a given time. It is not manners to eat after a man's companions have finished their meal, and so each guest eats as much and as fast as he can, and acts as if he had studied in the school of Sir Dugald Dalgetty.

Neither is it manners for any one to take a solitary meal, and, knowing this custom, Dr. Livingstone always contrived to have a second cup of tea or coffee by his side whenever he took his meals, so that the chief, or one of the principal men, might join in the repast.

Amongst the Makololo, rank has its drawbacks as well as its privileges, and among the former may be reckoned one of the customs which regulate meals. A chief may not dine alone, and it is also necessary that at each meal the whole of the provisions should be consumed. If Sekeletu had an ox killed, every particle of it was consumed at a single meal, and in consequence he often suffered severely from hunger before another could be prepared for him and his followers. So completely is this custom ingrained in the nature of the Makololo, that when Dr. Livingstone visited Sekeletu, the latter was quite scandalized that a portion of the meal was put aside. However, he soon saw the advantage of the plan, and after a while followed it himself, in spite of the remonstrances of the old men; and, while the missionary was with him, they played into each other's hands by each reserving a portion for the other at every meal.

Mention has been made of canoes. As the Makololo live much on the banks of the river Zambesi, they naturally use the canoe, and are skilful in its management.

These canoes are flat-bottomed, in order to enable them to pass over the numerous shallows of the Zambesi, and are sometimes forty feet in length, carrying from six to ten paddlers, besides other freight. The paddles are about eight feet in length, and when the canoe gets into shallow water, the paddles are used as punt-poles.

The paddlers stand while at work, and keep time as well as if they were engaged in a University boat race, so that they propel the vessel with considerable speed.

Being flat-bottomed, the boats need very skilful management, especially in so rapid and variable a river as the Zambesi, where sluggish depths, rock-beset shallows, and swift rapids, follow each other repeatedly. If the canoe should happen to come broadside to

the current, it would inevitably be upset, and, as the Makololo are not all swimmers, several of the crew would probably be drowned. As soon, therefore, as such a danger seems to be impending, those who can swim jump into the water, and guide the canoe through the sunken rocks and dangerous eddies. Skill in the management of the canoe is especially needed in the chase of the hippopotamus, which they contrive to hunt in its own element, and which they seldom fail in securing, in spite of the enormous size, the furious anger, and the formidable jaws of this remarkable animal.

The dress of the men differs but little from that which is in use in other parts of Africa south of the equator, and consists chiefly of a skin twisted round the loins, and a mantle of the same material thrown over the shoulders, the latter being only worn in cold weather.

The Makololo are a cleanly race, particularly when they happen to be in the neighbourhood of a river or lake, in which they bathe several times daily. The men, however, are better in this respect than the women, who seem rather to be afraid of cold water, preferring to rub their bodies and limbs with melted butter, which has the effect of making their skins glossy, and keeping off parasites, but also imparting a peculiarly unpleasant odour to themselves and their clothing.

As to the women, they are clothed in a far better manner than the men, and are exceedingly fond of ornaments, wearing a skin kilt and kaross, and adorning themselves with as many ornaments as they can afford. The traveller who has already been quoted mentions that a sister of the great chief Sebituane wore enough ornaments to be a load for an ordinary man. On each leg she had eighteen rings of solid brass, as thick as a man's finger, and three of copper under each knee; nineteen similar rings on her right arm, and eight of brass and copper on her left. She had also a large ivory ring above each elbow, a broad band of beads round her waist, and another round her neck, being altogether nearly one hundred large and heavy rings. The weight of the rings on her legs was so great, that she was obliged to wrap soft rags round the lower rings, as they had begun to chafe her ankles. Under this weight of metal she could walk but awkwardly, but fashion proved itself superior to pain with this Makololo woman, as among her European sisters.

Both in colour and general manners, the Makololo women are superior to most of the tribes. This superiority is partly due to the light warm brown of their complexion, and partly to their mode of life. Unlike the women of ordinary African tribes, those of the Makololo lead a comparatively easy life, having their harder labours shared by their husbands, who aid in digging the ground, and in other rough work. Even the domestic work is done more by servants than by the mistresses of the household, so that the Makololo women are not liable to that rapid deterioration which is so evident among other tribes.

In fact they have so much time to themselves, and so little to occupy them, that they are apt to fall into rather dissipated habits, and spend much of their time in smoking hemp and drinking beer, the former habit being a most insidious one, and apt to cause a peculiar eruptive disease. Sekeletu was a votary of the hemp-pipe, and, by his over-indulgence in this luxury, he induced the disease of which he afterwards died.

The only hard work that falls to the lot of the Makololo women is that of house-building, which is left entirely to them and their servants.

The mode of making a house is rather remarkable. The first business is to build a cylindrical tower of stakes and reeds, plastered with mud, and some nine or ten feet in height, the walls and floor being smoothly plastered, so as to prevent them from harbouring insects. A large conical roof is then put together on the ground, and completely thatched with reeds. It is then lifted by many hands, and lodged on the top of the circular tower. As the roof projects far beyond the central tower, it is supported by stakes, and as a general rule, the spaces between these stakes are filled up with a wall or fence of reeds plastered with mud. This roof is not permanently fixed either to the supporting stakes or the central tower, and can be removed at pleasure. When a visitor arrives among the Makololo, he is often lodged by the simple process of lifting a finished roof off an

unfinished house, and putting it on the ground. Although it is then so low that a man can scarcely sit, much less stand upright, it answers very well for Southern Africa, where the whole of active life is spent, as a rule, in the open air, and where houses are only used as sleeping-boxes. The doorway that gives admission into the circular chamber is always small. In a house that was assigned to Dr. Livingstone, it was only nineteen inches in total height, twenty-two in width at the floor, and twelve at the top. A native Makololo, with no particular encumbrance in the way of clothes, makes his way through the doorway easily enough; but an European with all the impediments of dress about him finds himself sadly hampered in attempting to gain the penetration of a Makololo house. Except through this door, the tower has neither light nor ventilation. Some of



HOUSE-BUILDING.

the best houses have two, and even three, of these towers, built concentrically within each other, and each having its entrance about as large as the door of an ordinary dog-kennel. Of course the atmosphere is very close at night, but the people care nothing about that.

The illustration is from a sketch kindly furnished by Mr. Baines. It represents a nearly completed Makololo house on the banks of the Zambesi river, just above the great Victoria Falls. The women have placed the roof on the building, and are engaged in the final process of fixing the thatch.

In the centre is seen the cylindrical tower which forms the inner chamber, together with a portion of the absurdly small door by which it is entered. Round it is the inner wall, which is also furnished with its doorway. These are made of stakes and withes,

upon which is worked a quantity of clay, well patted on by hand, so as to form a thick and strong wall. The clay is obtained from ant-hills, and is generally kneaded up with cow-dung, the mixture producing a kind of plaster that is very solid, and can be made beautifully smooth. Even the wall which surrounds the building and the whole of the floor are made of the same material.

It will be seen that there are four concentric walls in this building. First comes the outer wall, which encircles the whole premises. Next is a low wall which is built up against the posts which support the ends of the rafters, and which is partly supported by them. Within this is a third wall, which encloses what may be called the ordinary living room of the house; and within all is the inner chamber, or tower, which is in fact only another circular wall of much less diameter and much greater height. It will be seen that the walls of the house itself increase regularly in height, and decrease regularly in diameter, so as to correspond with the conical roof.

On the left of the illustration is part of a millet-field, beyond which are some completed houses. Among them are some of the fan-palms with recurved leaves. That on the left is a young tree, and retains all its leaves, while that on the right is an old one, and has shed the leaves towards the base of the stem, the foliage and the thickened portion of the trunk having worked their way gradually upwards. More palms are growing on the Zambesi river, and in the background are seen the vast spray clouds arising from the Falls.

The comparatively easy life led by the Makololo women makes polygamy less of a hardship to them than is the case among neighbouring tribes, and, in fact, even if the men were willing to abandon the system, the women would not consent to do so. With them marriage, though it never rises to the rank which it holds in civilized countries, is not a mere matter of barter. It is true that the husband is expected to pay a certain sum to the parents of his bride, as a recompense for her services, and as purchase-money to retain in his own family the children that she may have, and which would by law belong to her father. Then again, when a wife dies her husband is obliged to send an ox to her family, in order to recompense them for their loss, she being still reckoned as forming part of her parents' family, and her individuality not being totally merged into that of her husband.

Plurality of wives is in vogue among the Makololo, and is, indeed, an absolute necessity under the present conditions of the race, and the women would be quite as unwilling as the men to have a system of monogamy imposed upon them. No man is respected by his neighbours who does not possess several wives, and indeed without them he could not be wealthy, each wife tilling a certain quantity of ground, and the produce belonging to a common stock. Of course, there are cases where polygamy is certainly a hardship, as, for example, when old men choose to marry very young wives. But, on the whole, and under existing conditions, polygamy is the only possible system.

Another reason for the plurality of wives, as given by themselves, is that a man with one wife would not be able to exercise that hospitality which is one of the special duties of the tribe. Strangers are taken to the huts and there entertained as honoured guests, and as the women are the principal providers of food, chief cultivators of the soil, and sole guardians of the corn stores, their co-operation is absolutely necessary for any one who desires to carry out the hospitable institutions of his tribe.

It has been mentioned that the men often take their share in the hard work. This laudable custom, however, prevailed most among the true Makololo men, the incorporated tribes preferring to follow the usual African custom, and to make the women work while they sit down and smoke their pipes.

The men have become adepts at carving wood, making wooden pots with lids, and bowls and jars of all sizes. Moreover, of late years, the Makololo have learned to think that sitting on a stool is more comfortable than squatting on the bare ground, and have, in consequence, begun to carve the legs of their stools into various patterns.

Like the people from whom they are descended, the Makololo are a law-loving race, and manage their government by means of councils or parliaments, resembling the *pichos* of the Bechuanas, and consisting of a number of individuals assembled in a circle round the

chief, who occupies the middle. On one occasion, when there was a large halo round the sun, Dr. Livingstone pointed it out to his chief boatman. The man immediately replied that it was a parliament of the Barimo, i.e. the gods, or departed spirits, who were assembled round their chief, i.e. the sun.

For major crimes a *picho* is generally held, and the accused, if found guilty, is condemned to death. The usual mode of execution is for two men to grasp the condemned by his wrists, lead him a mile from the town, and then to spear him. Resistance is not offered, neither is the criminal allowed to speak. So quietly is the whole proceeding that, on one very remarkable occasion, a rival chief was carried off within a few yards of Dr. Livingstone without his being aware of the fact.

Shortly after Sebituane's death, while his son Sekeletu was yet a young man of eighteen, and but newly raised to the throne, a rival named Mpepe, who had been appointed by Sebituane chief of a division of the tribe, aspired to the throne. He strengthened his pretensions by superstition, having held for some years a host of incantations, at which a number of native wizards assembled, and performed a number of enchantments so potent that even the strong-minded Sebituane was afraid of him. After the death of that great chief Mpepe organized a conspiracy whereby he should be able to murder Sekeletu and to take his throne. The plot, however, was discovered, and on the night of its failure his executioners came quietly to Mpepe's fire, took his wrists, led him out, and speared him.

Sometimes the offender is taken into the river in a boat, strangled, and flung into the water, where the crocodiles are waiting to receive him. Disobedience to the chief's command is thought to be quite sufficient cause for such a punishment. To lesser offences fines are inflicted, a parliament not being needed, but the case being heard before the chief. Dr. Livingstone relates in a very graphic style the manner in which these cases are conducted.

"The complainant asks the man against whom he means to lodge his complaint to come with him to the chief. This is never refused. When both are in the kotla, the complainant stands up and states the whole case before the chief and people usually assembled there. He stands a few seconds after he has done this to recollect if he has forgotten anything. The witnesses to whom he has referred then rise up and tell all that they themselves have seen or heard, but not anything that they have heard from others. The defendant, after allowing some minutes to elapse, so that he may not interrupt any of the opposite party, slowly rises, folds his cloak about him, and in the most quiet and deliberate way he can assume, yawning, blowing his nose, &c., begins to explain the affair, denying the charge or admitting it, as the case may be.

"Sometimes, when galled by his remarks, the complainant utters a sentence of dissent. The accused turns quietly to him and says, 'Be silent, I sat still while you were speaking. Cannot you do the same? Do you want to have it all to yourself?' And, as the audience acquiesce in this bantering, and enforce silence, he goes on until he has finished all he wishes to say in his defence.

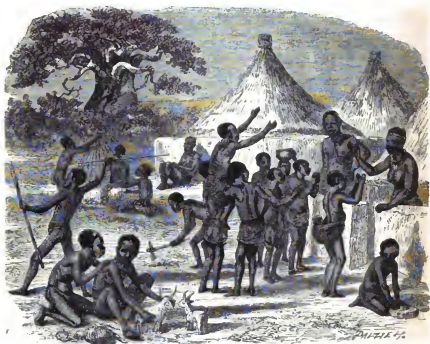
"If he has any witnesses to the truth of the facts of his defence, they give their evidence. No oath is administered, but occasionally, when a statement is questioned, a man will say, 'By my father,' or, 'By the chief, it is so.' Their truthfulness among each other is quite remarkable, but their system of government is such that Europeans are not in a position to realize it readily. A poor man will say in his defence against a rich one, 'I am astonished to hear a man so great as he make a false accusation,' as if the offence of falsehood were felt to be one against the society which the individual referred to had the greatest interest in upholding."

When a case is brought before the king by chiefs or other influential men, it is expected that the councillors who attend the royal presence shall give their opinions, and the permission to do so is inferred whenever the king remains silent after having heard both parties. It is a point of etiquette that all the speakers stand except the king, who alone has the privilege of speaking while seated.

There is even a series of game-laws in the country, all ivory belonging of right to the king, and every tusk being brought to him. This right is, however, only nominal, as the

king is expected to share the ivory among his people, and if he did not do so, he would not be able to enforce the law. In fact, the whole law practically resolves itself into this; that the king gets one tusk and the hunters get the other, while the flesh belongs to those who kill the animal. And, as the flesh is to the people far more valuable than the ivory, the arrangement is much fairer than appears at first sight.

Practically, it is a system of make-believes. The successful hunters kill two elephants, taking four tusks to the king, and make believe to offer them for his acceptance. He makes believe to take them as his right, and then makes believe to present them with two as a free gift from himself. They acknowledge the royal bounty with abundant



CHILDREN'S GAMES.

thanks and recapitulation of titles, such as Great Lion, &c., and so all parties are equally satisfied.

On page 355 I have described, from Mr. Baines' notes, a child's toy, the only example of a genuine toy which he found in the whole of Southern Africa. Among the Makololo, however, as well as among Europeans, the spirit of play is strong in children, and they engage in various games, chiefly consisting in childish imitation of the more serious pursuits of their parents. The following account of their play is given by Dr. Livingstone:—

"The children have merry times, especially in the cool of the evening. One of their games consists of a little girl being carried on the shoulders of two others. She sits with outstretched arms, as they walk about with her, and all the rest clap their hands, and stopping before each hut, sing pretty airs, some beating time on their little kilts of cow-

skin, and others making a curious humming sound between the songs. Excepting this and the skipping-rope, the play of the girls consists in imitation of the serious work of their mothers, building little huts, making small pots, and cooking, pounding corn in miniature mortars, or hoeing tiny gardens.

"The boys play with spears of reeds pointed with wood, and small shields, or bows and arrows; or amuse themselves in making little cattle-pens, or cattle in clay,—they show great ingenuity in the imitation of variously shaped horns. Some, too, are said to use slings, but, as soon as they can watch the goats or calves, they are sent to the field. We saw many boys riding on the calves they had in charge, but this is an innovation since the arrival of the English with their horses.

"Tselane, one of the ladies, on observing Dr. Livingstone noting observations on the wet and dry bulb thermometers, thought that he too was engaged in play. On receiving no reply to her question, which was rather difficult to answer, as their native tongue has no scientific terms, she said with roguish glee, 'Poor thing! playing like a little child!'"

I have the pleasure of presenting my readers with another of Mr. Baines's sketches. The scene is taken from a Makololo village on the bank of the river, and the time is supposed to be evening, after the day's work is over.

In the midst are the young girls playing the game mentioned by Mr. Anderssen, the central girl being carried by two others, and her companions singing and clapping their hands. The dress of the young girls is, as may be seen, very simple, and consists of leathern thongs, varying greatly in length, but always so slight and scanty that they do not hide the contour of the limbs. Several girls are walking behind them, carrying pots and bundles on the head, another is breaking up the ground with a toy hoe, while in the foreground is one girl pretending to grind corn between two stones, another pounding in a small model mortar, and a third with a rude doll carried as a mother carries her child. The parents are leaning against their houses, and looking at the sports of the children. On the left are seen some girls building a miniature hut, the roof of which they are just lifting on to the posts.

In the foreground on the left are the boys engaged in their particular games. Some are employed in making rude models of cattle and other animals, while others are engaged in mimic warfare. In the background is a boy who has gone out to fetch the flock of goats home, and is walking in front of them, followed by his charge. A singular tree often overhangs the houses and is very characteristic of that part of Africa. In the native language it is called Mosaawe, and by the Portuguese, Paopisa. It has a leaf somewhat like that of the acacia, and the blossoms and fruit are seen hanging side by side. The latter very much resembles a wooden cucumber, and is about as eatable.

On page 370 is another sketch by Mr. Baines, representing a domestic scene in a Makololo family.

The house belongs to a chief named M'Bopo, who was very friendly to Mr. Baines and his companions, and was altogether a fine specimen of a savage gentleman. He was exceedingly hospitable to his guests, not only feeding them well, but producing great jars of pombe, or native beer, which they were obliged to consume either personally or by deputy. He even apologised for his inability to offer them some young ladies as temporary wives, according to the custom of the country, the girls being at the time all absent, and engaged in ceremonies very similar to those which have been described when treating of the Bechuanas.

M'Bopo is seated in the middle, and may be distinguished by the fact that he is wearing all his hair, the general fashion being to crop it and dress it in various odd ways. Just behind him is one of his chief men, whom Mr. Baines was accustomed to designate as Toby Fillpot, partly because he was very assiduous in filling the visitor's jars with pombe, and partly because he was more than equally industrious in emptying them. It will be noticed that he has had his head shaved, and that the hair is beginning to grow in little patches. Behind him is another man, who has shaved his head at the sides, and has allowed a mere tuft of hair to grow along the top. In front of M'Bopo is a huge earthen vessel full of pombe, and by the side of it is the calabash ladle by which the liquid is transferred to the drinking vessels.

M'Bopo's chief wife sits beside him, and is distinguished by the two ornaments which she wears. On her forehead is a circular piece of hide, kneaded while wet so as to form a shallow cone. The inside of this cone is entirely covered with beads, mostly white, and scarlet in the centre. Upon her neck is another ornament, which is valued very highly. It is the base of a shell, a species of conus—the whole of which has been ground away except the base. This ornament is thought so valuable that when the great chief Shinte presented Dr. Livingstone with one, he took the precaution of coming alone, and carefully closing the tent door, so that none of his people should witness an act of such extravagant generosity.

This lady was good enough to express her opinion of the white travellers. They were not so ugly, said she, as she had expected. All that hair on their heads and faces was



M'BOPO AT HOME.

certainly disagreeable, but their faces were pleasant enough, and their hands were well formed, but the great defect in them was, that they had no toes. The worthy lady had never heard of boots, and evidently considered them as analogous to the hoofs of cattle. It was found necessary to remove the boots, and convince her that the white man really had toes.

Several of the inferior wives are also sitting on the ground. One of them has her scalp entirely shaved, and the other has capriciously diversified her head by allowing a few streaks of hair to go over the top of the head, and another to surround it like a band. The reed door is seen turned aside from the opening, and a few baskets are hanging here and there upon the wall.

The Makololo have plenty of amusements after their own fashion, which is certainly not that of an European. Even those who have lived among them for some time, and have acknowledged that they are among the most favourable specimens of African heathendom, have been utterly disgusted and wearied with the life which they had to lead. There is no quiet and no repose day or night, and Dr. Livingstone, who might be expected to be thoroughly hardened against annoyance by trifles, states broadly that the dancing, singing, roaring, jesting, story-telling, grumbling, and quarrelling of the Makololo were a severer penance than anything which he had undergone in all his experiences. He had to live with them, and was therefore brought in close contact with them.

The first three items of savage life, namely, dancing, singing, and roaring, seem to be inseparably united, and the savages seem to be incapable of getting up a dance unless accompanied by roaring on the part of the performers, and singing on the part of the spectators—the latter sounds being not more melodious than the former. Dr. Livingstone gives a very graphic account of a Makololo dance. "As this was the first visit which Sekeletu had paid to this part of his dominions, it was to many a season of great joy. The head men of each village presented oxen, milk, and beer, more than the horde which accompanied him could devour, though their abilities in that way are something wonderful.

"The people usually show their joy and work off their excitement in dances and songs. The dance consists of the men standing nearly naked in a circle, with clubs or small battle-axes in their hands, and each roaring at the loudest pitch of his voice, while they simultaneously lift one leg, stamp heavily twice with it, then lift the other and give one stamp with it; this is the only movement in common. The arms and head are thrown about also in every direction, and all this time the roaring is kept up with the utmost possible vigour. The continued stamping makes a cloud of dust ascend, and they leave a deep ring in the ground where they have stood.

"If the scene were witnessed in a lunatic asylum, it would be nothing out of the way, and quite appropriate as a means of letting off the excessive excitement of the brain. But here, grey-headed men joined in the performance with as much zest as others whose youth might be an excuse for making the perspiration start off their bodies with the exertion. Motibe asked what I thought of the Makololo dance. I replied, 'It is very hard work, and brings but small profit.' 'It is,' he replied; 'but it is very nice, and Sekeletu will give us an ox for dancing for him.' He usually does slaughter an ox for the dancers when the work is over.

"The women stand by, clapping their hands, and occasionally one advances within the circle, composed of a hundred men, makes a few movements, and then retires. As I never tried it, and am unable to enter into the spirit of the thing, I cannot recommend the Makololo polka to the dancing world, but I have the authority of no less a person than Motebe, Sekeletu's father-in-law, for saying that it is very nice."

Many of the Makololo are inveterate smokers, preferring hemp even to tobacco, because it is more intoxicating. They delight in smoking themselves into a positive frenzy, "which passes away in a rapid stream of unmeaning words, or short sentences, as, 'The green grass grows,' 'The fat cattle thrive,' 'The fishes swim.' No one in the group pays the slightest attention to the vehement eloquence, or the sage or silly utterances of the oracle, who stops abruptly, and, the instant common sense returns, looks foolish." They smoke the hemp through water, using a koodoo horn for their pipe, much in the way that the Damaras and other tribes use it.

Over indulgence in this luxury has a very prejudicial effect on the health, producing an eruption over the whole body that is quite unmistakable. In consequence of this effect, the men prohibit their wives from using the hemp, but the result of the prohibition seems only to be that the women smoke secretly instead of openly, and are afterwards discovered by the appearance of the skin. It is the more fascinating, because its use imparts a spurious strength to the body, while it enervates the mind to such a degree that the user is incapable of perceiving the state in which he is gradually sinking, or of exercising sufficient self-control to abandon or even to modify the destructive habit.

Sekeletu was a complete victim of the hemp-pipe, and there is no doubt that the illness, something like the dreaded "crawl-crawl" of Western Africa, was aggravated, if not caused, by over-indulgence in smoking hemp.

The Makololo have an unbounded faith in medicines, and believe that there is no ill to which humanity is subject which cannot be removed by white man's medicine. One woman, who thought herself too thin to suit the African ideas of beauty, asked for the medicine of fatness, and a chief, whose six wives had only produced one boy among a number of girls, was equally importunate for some medicine that would change the sex of the future offspring.

The burial-places of the Makololo are seldom conspicuous, but in some cases the relics of a deceased chief are preserved, and regarded with veneration, so that the guardians cannot be induced to sell them even for the most tempting prices.



SOUTH AFRICAN DOUBLE SPOON.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE BAYEYE AND MAKOKA TRIBES.

MEANING OF THE NAME—GENERAL APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER—THIEVING—ABILITY IN FISHING—CANOES—ELEPHANT-CATCHING—DRESS—THE MAKOKA TRIBE—THEIR LOCALITY—A MAKOKA CHIEF'S ROGUERY—SKILL IN MANAGING CANOES—ZANGUELLAH AND HIS BOATS—HIPPOPOTAMUS HUNTING WITH THE CANOE—STRUCTURE OF THE HARPOON—THE REED-RAFT AND ITS USES—SUPERSTITIONS—PLANTING TREES—TRANSMIGRATION—THE PONDORO AND HIS WIFE.

THE BAYEYE TRIBE.

As the Bayeye tribe has been mentioned once or twice during the account of the Makololo, a few lines of notice will be given to them.

They originally inhabited the country about Lake Ngami, but were conquered by another tribe, the Batoanas, and reduced to comparative serfdom. The conquerors called them Bakoba, *i.e.* serfs, but they themselves take the pretentious title of Bayeye, or Men. They attribute their defeat to the want of shields, though the superior discipline of their enemies had probably more to do with their victory than the mere fact of possessing a shield.

On one notable occasion, the Bayeye proved conclusively that the shield does not make the warrior. Their chief had taken the trouble to furnish them with shields, hoping to make soldiers of them. They received the gift with great joy, and loudly boasted of the prowess which they were going to show. Unfortunately for them, a marauding party of the Makololo came in sight, when the valiant warriors forgot all about their shields, jumped into their canoes, and paddled away day and night down the river, until they had put a hundred miles or so between them and the dangerous spot.

In general appearance, the Bayeye bear some resemblance to the Ovambo tribe, the complexion and general mould of features being of a similar cast. They seem to have retained but few of their own characteristics, having accepted those of their conquerors, whose dress and general manners they have assumed. Their language bears some resemblance to that of the Ovambo tribe, but they have contrived to impart into it a few clicks which are evidently derived from the Hottentots.

They are amusing and cheerful creatures, and as arrant thieves and liars as can well be found. If they can only have a pot on the fire full of meat, and a pipe, their happiness seems complete, and they will feast, dance, sing, smoke, and tell anecdotes all night long. Perhaps their thievishness is to be attributed to their servile condition. At all events, they will steal everything that is not too hot or heavy for them, and are singularly expert in their art.

Mr. Anderssen mentions that by degrees his Bayeye attendants contrived to steal nearly the whole of his stock of beads, and, as those articles are the money of Africa

their loss was equivalent to failure in his journey. Accordingly, he divided those which were left into parcels, marked each separately, and put them away in the packages as usual. Just before the canoes landed for the night, he went on shore, and stood by the head of the first canoe while his servant opened the packages, in order to see if anything had been stolen. Scarcely was the first package opened when the servant exclaimed that the Bayeye had been at it. The next move was to present his double-barrelled gun at the native who was in charge of the canoe, and threaten to blow out his brains if all the stolen property was not restored.

At first the natives took to their arms, and appeared inclined to fight, but the sight of the ominous barrels, which they knew were in the habit of hitting their mark, proved too much for them, and they agreed to restore the beads provided that their conduct was not mentioned to their chief *Lecholetébé*. The goods being restored, pardon was granted, with the remark that, if anything were stolen for the future, Mr. Anderssen would shoot the first man whom he saw. This threat was all-sufficient, and ever afterwards the Bayeye left his goods in peace.

In former days the Bayeye used to be a bucolic nation, having large herds of cattle. These, however, were all seized by their conquerors, who only permitted them to rear a few goats, which, however, they value less for the flesh and milk than for the skins, which are converted into karosses. Fowls are also kept, but they are small, and not of a good breed.

In consequence of the deprivation of their herds, the Bayeye are forced to live on the produce of the ground and the flesh of wild animals. Fortunately for them, their country is particularly fertile, so that the women, who are the only practical agriculturists have little trouble in tilling the soil. A light hoe is the only instrument used, and with this the ground is scratched rather than dug, just before the rainy season; the seed deposited almost at random immediately after the first rains have fallen. Pumpkins, melons, calabashes, and earth fruits are also cultivated, and tobacco is grown by energetic natives.

There are also several indigenous fruits, one of which, called the "moshoma," is largely used. The tree on which it grows is a very tall one, the trunk is very straight, and the lowermost branches are at a great height from the ground. The fruit can therefore only be gathered when it falls by its own ripeness. It is first dried in the sun, and then prepared for storage by being pounded in a wooden mortar. When used, it is mixed with water until it assumes a cream-like consistency. It is very sweet, almost as sweet as honey, which it much resembles in appearance. Those who are accustomed to its use find it very nutritious, but to strangers it is at first unwholesome, being apt to derange the digestive system. The timber of the moshama-tree is useful, being mostly employed in building canoes.

The Bayeye are very good huntsmen, and are remarkable for their skill in capturing fish, which they either pierce with spears or entangle in nets made of the fibres of a native aloe. These fibres are enormously strong, as indeed is the case with all the varieties of the aloe plant.

The nets are formed very ingeniously from other plants besides the aloe, such for example as the *hibiscus*, which grows plentifully on river banks, and moist places in general. The float-ropes, i.e. those that carry the upper edge of the nets, are made from the "ifé" (*Sansevieria Angolensis*), a plant that somewhat resembles the common water-flag of England. The floats themselves are formed of stems of a water-plant, which has the peculiarity of being hollow, and divided into cells, about an inch in length, by transverse valves. The mode in which the net is made is almost identical with that which is in use in England. The shaft of the spear which the Bayeye use in catching fish is made of a very light wood, so that, when the fish is struck, the shaft of the spear ascends to the surface, and discharges the double duty of tiring the wounded fish, and giving to the fisherman the means of lifting his finny prey out of the water.

The Bayeye are not very particular as to their food, and not only eat the ten fishes which, as they boast, inhabit their rivers, but also kill and eat a certain water-snake, brown in colour and spotted with yellow, which is often seen undulating its devious

course across the river. It is rather a curious circumstance that, although the Bayeye live so much on fish, and are even proud of the variety of the finny tribe which their waters afford them, the more southern Bechuanas not only refuse themselves to eat fish, but look with horror and disgust upon all who do so.

The canoes of the Bayeye are simply trunks of trees hollowed out. As they are not made for speed, but for use, elegance of shape is not at all considered. If the tree trunk which is destined to be hewn into a canoe happens to be straight, well and good. But it sometimes has a bend, and in that case the canoe has a bend also. The Bayeye are pardonably fond of their canoes, not to say proud of them. As Dr. Livingstone well observes, they regard their rude vessels as an Arab does his camel. "They have always fires in them, and prefer sleeping in them when on a journey to spending the night on shore. 'On land you have lions,' say they, 'serpents, hyænas, as your enemies; but in your canoe, behind a bank of reeds, nothing can harm you.'"

"Their sullen disposition leads to their villages being frequently visited by hungry strangers. We had a pot on the fire in the canoe by the way, and when we drew near the villages devoured the contents. When fully satisfied ourselves, I found that we could all look upon any intruders with much complaisance, and show the pot in proof of having devoured the last morsel."

They are also expert at catching the larger animals in pitfalls, which they ingeniously dig along the banks of the rivers, so as to entrap the elephants and other animals as they come to drink at night. They plant their pitfalls so closely together that it is scarcely possible for a herd of elephants to escape altogether unharmed, as many as thirty or forty being sometimes dug in a row, and close together. Although the old and experienced elephants have learned to go in front of their comrades, and sound the earth for concealed traps, the great number of these treacherous pits often makes these precautions useless.

The dress of the Bayeye is much the same as that of the Batoanas and their kinsfolk, namely, a skin wrapped round the waist, a kaross, and as many beads and other ornaments as can be afforded. Brass, copper, and iron are in great request as materials for ornaments, especially among the women, who display considerable taste in arranging and contrasting the colours of their simple jewellery. Sometimes a wealthy woman is so loaded with beads, rings, and other decorations, that, as the chief Secholétébè said, "they actually grunt under their burden" as they walk along.

Their architecture is of the simplest description, and much resembles that of the Hottentots, the houses being mere skeletons of sticks covered with reed mats. Their amusements are as simple as their habitations. They are fond of dancing, and in their gestures they endeavour to imitate the movements of various wild animals—their walk, their mode of feeding, their sports, and their battles. Of course they drink, smoke, and take snuff whenever they have the opportunity. The means for the first luxury they can themselves supply, making a sort of beer, on which, by drinking vast quantities, they manage to intoxicate themselves. Snuff-taking is essentially a manly practice, while smoking hemp seems to be principally followed by the women. Still, there are few men who will refuse a pipe of hemp, and perhaps no woman who will refuse snuff if offered to them. On the whole, setting aside their inveterate habits of stealing and lying, they are tolerably pleasant people, and their naturally cheerful and lively disposition causes the traveller to feel almost an affection for them, even though he is obliged to guard every portion of his property from their nimble fingers.

THE MAKOKA TRIBE.

TOWARDS the east of Lake Ngami, there is a river called the Bo-tlet-le, one end of which communicates indirectly with the lake, and the other with a vast salt-pan. The consequence of this course is, that occasionally the river runs in two directions, westward to the lake, and eastward to the salt-pan; the stream which causes this curious change flowing into it somewhere about the middle. The people who inhabit this district are called Makoka, and, even if not allied to the Bayeye, have much in common with them.

In costume and general appearance they bear some resemblance to the Bechuanas, except that they are rather of a blacker complexion. The dress of the men sometimes consists of a snake-skin some six or seven feet in length, and five or six inches in width. The women wear a small square apron made of hide, ornamented round the edge with small beads.

Their character seems much on a par with that of most savages, namely, impulsive, irreflective, kindly when not crossed, revengeful when angered, and honest when there is nothing to steal. To judge from the behaviour of some of the Makoka men, they are crafty, dishonest, and churlish; while, if others are taken as a sample, they are simple, good-natured, and hospitable. Savages, indeed, cannot be judged by the same tests as would be applied to civilized races, having the strength and craft of man with the moral weakness of children.

The very same tribe, and even the very same individuals, have obtained—and deserved—exactly opposite characters from those who have known them well, one person describing them as perfectly honest, and another as arrant cheats and thieves. The fact is, that savages have no moral feelings on the subject, not considering theft to be a crime nor honesty a virtue, so that they are honest or not, according to circumstances. The subjugated tribes about Lake Ngami are often honest from a very curious motive.

They are so completely enslaved that they cannot even conceive the notion of possessing property, knowing that their oppressors would take by force any article which they happened to covet. They are so completely cowed that food is the only kind of property that they can appreciate, and they do not consider even that to be their own until it is eaten. Consequently, they are honest because there would be no use in stealing. But, when white men come and take them under their protection, the case is altered. At first, they are honest for the reasons above mentioned, but when they begin to find that they are paid for their services, and allowed to retain their wages, the idea of property begins to enter their minds, and they desire to procure as much as they can. Therefore, from being honest they become thieves. They naturally wish to obtain property without trouble, and, as they find that stealing is easier than working, they steal accordingly, not attaching any moral guilt to taking the property of another, but looking on it in exactly the same light as hunting or fishing.

Thus it is that the white man is often accused of demoralizing savages, and converting them from a simple and honest race into a set of cheats and thieves. Whereas, paradoxical as it may seem, the very development of roguery is a proof that the savages in question have not been demoralized, but have actually been raised in the social scale.

Mr. Chapman's experiences of the Makoka tribe were anything but agreeable. They stole, and they lied, and they cheated him. He had a large cargo of ivory, and found that his oxen were getting weaker, and could not draw their costly load. So he applied to the Makoka for canoes, and found that they were perfectly aware of his distress, and were ready to take advantage of it, by demanding exorbitant sums, and robbing him whenever they could, knowing that he could not well proceed without their assistance.

At last he succeeded in hiring a boat in which the main part of his cargo could be carried along the river. By one excuse and another the Makoka chief delayed the start until the light wagon had gone on past immediate recall, and then said that he really

could not convey the ivory by boat, but that he would be very generous, and take his ivory across the river to the same side as the wagon. Presently, the traveller found that the chief had contrived to open a tin-box in which he kept the beads that were his money, and had stolen the most valuable kinds. As all the trade depended on the beads he saw that determined measures were needful, presented his rifle at the breast of the chief's son, who was on board during the absence of his father, and assumed so menacing an aspect that the young man kicked aside a lump of mud, which is always plastered into the bottom of the boats, and discovered some of the missing property. The rest was produced from another spot by means of the same inducement.

As soon as the threatening muzzles were removed, he got on shore, and ran off with a rapidity that convinced Mr. Chapman that some roguery was as yet undiscovered. On counting the tusks it was found that the thief had stolen ivory as well as beads, but he had made such good use of his legs that he could not be overtaken, and the traveller had to put up with his loss as he best could.

Yet it would be unfair to give all the Makoka a bad character on account of this conduct. They can be, and for the most part are, very pleasant men, as far as can be expected from savages. Mr. Baines had no particular reason to complain of them, and seems to have liked them well enough.

The Makoka are essentially a boatman tribe, being accustomed to their canoes from earliest infancy, and being obliged to navigate them through the perpetual changes of this capricious river, which at one time is tolerably quiet, and at another is changed into a series of whirling eddies and dangerous rapids, the former being aggravated by occasional back-flow of the waters.

The canoes are like the racing river-boats of our own country, enormously long in proportion to their width, and appear to be so frail that they could hardly endure the weight of a single human being. Yet they are much less perilous than they look, and their safety is as much owing to their construction as to the skill of their navigator. It is scarcely possible, without having seen the Makoka at work, to appreciate the wonderful skill with which they manage their frail barks, and the enormous cargoes which they will take safely through the rapids. It often happens that the waves break over the side, and rush into the canoe, so that, unless the water were baled out, down the vessel must go.

The Makoka, however, do not take the trouble to stop when engaged in baling out their boats, nor do they use any tool for this purpose. When the canoe gets too full of water, the boatman goes to one end of it so as to depress it, and cause the water to run towards him. With one foot he then kicks out the water, making it fly from his instep as if from a rapidly-wielded scoop. In fact the canoe is to the Makoka what the camel is to the Arab, and the horse to the Comanches, and, however they may feel an inferiority on shore, they are the masters when on board their canoes. The various warlike tribes which surround them have proved their superiority on land, but when once they are fairly launched into the rapids of the river or the wild waves of the lake, the Makokas are masters of the situation, and the others are obliged to be very civil to them.

One of the typical men of this tribe was Makata, a petty chief, or headman of a village. He was considered to be the best boatman and hunter on the river, especially distinguishing himself in the chase of the hippopotamus. The illustration on page 378 is from a sketch by Mr. Baines, who depicts forcibly the bold and graceful manner in which the Makokas manage their frail craft.

The spot on which the sketch was taken is a portion of the Bo-tlet-le river, and shows the fragile nature of the canoes, as well as the sort of water through which the daring boatman will take them. The figure in the front of the canoe is a celebrated boatman and hunter, named Zanguellah. He was so successful in the latter pursuit that his house and court-yard were filled with the skulls of hippopotami which he had slain with his own hand. He is standing in the place of honour, and guiding his boat with a light but strong pole. The other figure is that of his assistant. He has been hunting up the river, and has killed two sable antelopes, which he is bringing home. The canoe is only fifteen or sixteen feet long, and eighteen inches wide, and yet Zanguellah ventured to load it with two large and heavy antelopes, besides the weight of himself and assistant. So small are

some of these canoes, that if a man sits in them, and places his hands on the sides, his fingers are in the water.

The reeds that are seen on the left of the illustration are very characteristic of the country. Wherever they are seen the water is sure to be tolerably deep—say at least four or five feet—and they grow to a great height, forming thick clumps some fifteen feet in height. It often happens that they are broken by the hippopotamus or other aquatic creatures, and then they lie recumbent on the water, with their heads pointing down the



BOATING SCENE ON THE BOTLET-LE RIVER

stream. When this is the case, they seem to grow *ad libitum*, inasmuch as the water supports their weight, and the root still continues to supply nourishment.

In the background are seen two canoes propelled by paddles. The scene which is here represented really occurred, and was rather a ludicrous one. The first canoe belongs to the Makololo chief, M'Bopo, who was carrying Messrs. Baines and Chapman in his canoe. He was essentially a gentleman, being free from the habit of constant begging which makes so many savages disagreeable. He had been exceedingly useful to the white men, who intended to present him with beads as a recompense for his services. It so happened that another chief, named Moskotlani, who was a thorough specimen of the begging, pilfering, unpleasant native, suspected that his countryman might possibly procure beads from the white men, and wanted to have his share. So he stuck close by M'Bopo's canoe, and watched it so jealously that no beads could pass without his knowledge. However, Moskotlani had his paddle, and M'Bopo had his beads, though they were given to him on shore, where his jealous compatriot could not see the transaction.

It has been mentioned that Makáta was a mighty hunter as well as an accomplished boatman, and, indeed, great skill in the management of canoes is an absolute essential in a hunter's life, inasmuch as the chief game is the hippopotamus. The next few pages will be given to the bold and sportsmanlike mode of hunting the hippopotamus which is employed by the Makoba and some other tribes, and the drawings which illustrate the account are from sketches by Mr. Baines. As these sketches were all taken on the spot, they have the advantage of perfect accuracy, while the fire and spirit which animates them could only have been attained by one who was an eye-witness as well as an artist.

According to Dr. Livingstone, these people are strangely fearful of the lion, while they meet with perfect unconcern animals which are quite as dangerous, if not more so. That they will follow unconcernedly the buffalo into the bush has already been mentioned, and yet the buffalo is even more to be dreaded than the lion himself, being quite as fierce, more cunning, and more steadily vindictive. A lion will leap on a man with a terrific roar, strike him to the ground, carry him off to the den, and then eat him, so that the pressure of hunger forms some excuse for the act. But, with the buffalo no such excuse can be found.

A "rogue" buffalo, *i.e.* one which has been driven from his fellows, and is obliged to lead a solitary life, is as fierce, as cunning, and as treacherous an animal as can be found. He does not eat mankind, and yet he delights in hiding in thick bushes, rushing out unexpectedly on any one who may happen to approach, and killing him at a blow. Nor is he content with the death of his victim. He stands over the body, kneels on it, pounds it into the earth with his feet, walks away, comes back again, as if drawn by some irresistible attraction, and never leaves it, until nothing is visible save a mere shapeless mass of bones and flesh.

Yet against this animal the Makoba hunters will match themselves, and they will even attack the hippopotamus, an animal which, in its own element, is quite as formidable as the buffalo on land.

Their first care is to prepare a number of harpoons, which are made in the following manner. A stout pole is cut of hard and very heavy wood, some ten or twelve feet long, and three or four inches in thickness. At one end a hole is bored, and into this hole is slipped the iron head of the harpoon. The shape of this head can be seen from the illustration on page 380. It consists of a spear-shaped piece of iron, with a bold barb, and is about a foot in length.

The head is attached to the shaft by a strong band composed of a great number of small ropes or strands laid parallel to each other, and being quite loosely arranged. The object of this multitude of ropes is to prevent the hippopotamus from severing the cord with his teeth, which are sharp as a chisel, and would cut through any single cord with the greatest ease. The animal is sure to snap at the cords as soon as he feels the wound, but, on account of the loose manner in which they are laid, they only become entangled among the long curved teeth, and, even if one or two are severed, the others retain their hold.

To the other end of the shaft is attached a long and strongly-made rope of palm-leaf, which is coiled up in such manner as to be carried out readily when loosened.

Each canoe has on board two or three of these harpoons, and a quantity of ordinary spears. Preserving perfect silence the boatmen allow themselves to float down the stream until they come to the spot which has been chosen by the herd for a bathing-place. They do not give chase to any particular animal, but wait until one of them comes close to the boat, when the harpooner takes his weapon, strikes it into the animal's back and loosens his hold.

The illustration represents this phase of the proceedings. In the front is seen the head of a hippopotamus as it usually appears when the animal is swimming, the only portion seen above the water being the ears, the eyes, and the nostrils. It is a remarkable fact that when the hippopotamus is at liberty in its native stream, not only the ears and the nostrils, but even the ridge over the eyes are of a bright scarlet colour, so brilliant indeed that colour can scarcely convey an idea of the hue. The specimens in the Zoological Gardens, although fine examples of the species, never exhibit this brilliancy of

colour, and, indeed, are no more like the hippopotamus in its own river than a prize hog is like a wild boar.

A very characteristic attitude is shown in the second animal, which is represented as it appears when lifting its head out of the water for the purpose of reconnoitring. The horse-like expression is easily recognisable, and Mr. Baines tells me that he never understood how appropriate was the term *River Horse* (which is the literal translation of the word hippopotamus) until he saw the animals disporting themselves at liberty in their own streams.



SPEARING THE HIPPOPOTAMUS.

In the front of the canoes is standing Makáta, about to plunge the harpoon into the back of the hippopotamus, while his assistants are looking after the rope, and keeping themselves in readiness to paddle out of the way of the animal, should it make an attack. Perfect stillness is required for planting the harpoon properly, as, if a splash were made in the water, or a sudden noise heard on land, the animals would take flight, and keep out of the way of the canoes.

On the left is a clump of the tall reeds which have already been mentioned, accompanied by some papyrus. The huge trees seen on the bank are baobabs, which sometimes attain the enormous girth of a hundred feet, and even more. The small white flowers that are floating on the surface of the water are the white lotus. They shine out very conspicuously on the bosom of the clear, deep-blue water, and sometimes occur in such numbers that they look like stars in the blue firmament, rather than mere flowers on the water. It is rather curious, by the way, that the Damaras, who are much more familiar with the land than the water, call the hippopotamus the *Water Rhinoceros*, whereas the Makoka, Batoka, and other tribes, who are more at home on the water, call the rhinoceros the *Land Hippopotamus*.

Now comes the next scene in this savage and most exciting drama. Stung by the sudden and unexpected pang of the wound, the hippopotamus gives a convulsive spring, which shakes the head of the harpoon out of its socket, and leaves it only attached to the shaft by its many-stranded rope. At this period, the animal seldom shows fight, but dashes down the stream at its full speed, only the upper part of its head and back being

visible above the surface, and towing the canoe along as if it were a cork. Meanwhile, the harpooner and his comrades hold tightly to the rope, paying out if necessary, and hauling in whenever possible—in fact, playing their gigantic prey just as an angler plays a large fish. Their object is twofold, first to tire the animal, and then to get it into shallow water; for a hippopotamus in all its strength, and with the advantage of deep water, would be too much even for these courageous hunters. The pace that the animal attains is something wonderful, and, on looking at its apparently clumsy means of propulsion, the swiftness of its course is really astonishing.

Sometimes, but very rarely, it happens that the animal is so active and fierce, that the hunters are obliged to cast loose the rope, and make off as they best can. They do not, however, think of abandoning so valuable a prey—not to mention the harpoon and rope—and manage as well as they can to keep the animal in sight. At the earliest opportunity, they paddle towards the wounded, and by this time weakened animal, and renew the chase.

The accompanying illustration represents the furious rush of the hippopotamus. The animal is supposed to be getting tired, and has relaxed its headlong speed sufficiently to enable the boatmen to haul in the rope, and to bring themselves closer to their prey, so



HIPPOPOTAMUS TOWING THE CANOE.

that as soon as they come into shallow water they may begin the final attack. The scene of this drawing is a part of the Bo-tlet-le river, just by a small village, which may be seen on the left bank. Close by the water's edge are seen some dwarf palms, and the river débris, which hang on the roots on the right of the drawing, show the height to which the river will rise when the floods pour into it.

The hippopotamus is most dangerous when he feels his strength failing, and with the courage of despair dashes at the canoe. The hunters have then no child's play before them. Regardless of everything but pain and fury, the animal rushes at the canoe, tries to knock it to pieces by blows from his enormous head, or seizes the edge in his jaws, and tears out the side. Should he succeed in capsizing or destroying the canoe, the hunters have an anxious time to pass; for if the furious animal can gripe one of them in his huge jaws, the curved, chisel-like teeth inflict certain death, and have been known to cut an unfortunate man fairly in two.

Whenever the animal does succeed in upsetting or breaking the boat, the men have recourse to a curious expedient. They dive to the bottom of the river, and grasp a stone, a root, or anything that will keep them below the surface, and hold on as long as their lungs will allow them. The reason for this manœuvre is, that when the animal has sent

the crew into the river, it raises its head, as seen on page 380, and looks about on the surface for its enemies. It has no idea of foes beneath the surface, and if it does not see anything that looks like a man, it makes off, and so allows the hunters to emerge, half-drowned, into the air.

In order to keep off the animal, spears are freely used; some being thrust at him by hand, and others slung like javelins. They cannot, however, do much harm, unless one should happen to enter the eye, which is so well protected by its bony penthouse that it is almost impregnable to anything except a bullet. The head is one huge mass of solid



THE FINAL ATTACK.

bone, so thick and hard that even fire-arms make little impression on it, except in one or two small spots. The hunters, therefore, cannot expect to inflict any material damage on the animal, and only hope to deter it from charging by the pain which the spears can cause.

The last scene is now approaching. Having effectually tired the animal, which is also weakened by loss of blood from the wound, and guided it into shallow water, several of the crew jump overboard, carry the end of the rope ashore, and pass it with a "double turn" round a tree. The fate of the animal is then sealed. Finding itself suddenly checked in its course, it makes new efforts, and fights and struggles as if it were quite fresh. Despite the pain, it tries to tear itself away from the fatal cord; but the rope is too strong to be broken, and the inch-thick hide of the hippopotamus holds the barb so firmly that even the enormous strength and weight of the animal cannot cause it to give way. Finding that a fierce pull in one direction is useless, it rushes in another, and so

slackens the rope, which is immediately hauled taut by the hunters on shore, so that the end is much shortened, and the animal brought nearer to the bank. Each struggle only has the same result, the hunters holding the rope fast as long as there is a strain upon it, and hauling it in as soon as it is slackened. The reader may easily see how this is done by watching a sailor make fast a steamer to the pier, a single man being able to resist the strain of several tons.

As soon as the hippopotamus is hauled up close to the bank, and its range of movements limited, the rope is made fast, and the hunters all combine for the final assault. Armed with large, heavy, long-bladed spears, made for the express purpose, they boldly approach the infuriated animal, and hurl their weapons at him. Should the water be deep beyond him, some of the hunters take to their canoes, and are able to attack the animal with perfect security, because the rope which is affixed to the tree prevents him from reaching them. At last, the unfortunate animal, literally worried to death by numerous wounds, none of which would be immediately fatal, succumbs to fatigue and loss of blood, and falls, never to rise again.

The accompanying illustration represents this, the most active and exciting scene of the three. In the centre is the hippopotamus, who has been driven into shallow water, and is plunging about in mingled rage and terror. With his terrible jaws he has already crushed the shaft of the harpoon, and is trying to bite the cords which secure the head to the shaft. He has severed a few of them, but the others are lying entangled among his teeth, and retain their hold. Some of the hunters have just carried the end of the rope ashore, and are going to pass it round the trunk of the tree; while some of their comrades are boldly attacking the animal on foot, and others are coming up behind him in canoes.

On the Zambesi river, a harpoon is used which is made on a similar principle, but which differs in several details of construction.

The shaft is made of light wood, and acts as a float. The head fits into a socket, like that which has already been mentioned; but, instead of being secured to the shaft by a number of small cords, it is fastened to one end of the long rope, the other end of which is attached to the butt of the shaft. When arranged for use, the rope is wound spirally round the shaft, which it covers completely. As soon as the hippopotamus is struck, the shaft is shaken from the head by the wounded animal's struggles, the rope is unwound, and the light shaft acts as a buoy, whereby the rope can be recovered, in case the hippopotamus should sever it, or the hunters should be obliged to cast it loose.

Sometimes these tribes, *i.e.* the Makololo, Bayeye, and others, use a singularly-ingenuous raft in this sport. Nothing can be simpler than the construction of this raft. A quantity of reeds are cut down just above the surface, and are thrown in a heap upon the water. More reeds are then cut, and thrown crosswise upon the others, and so the natives proceed until the raft is formed. No poles, beams, nor other supports, are used, neither are the reeds lashed together in bundles. They are merely flung on the water, and left to entangle themselves into form. By degrees the lower reeds become soaked with water, and sink, so that fresh material must be added above.

Nothing can look more insecure or fragile than this rude reed-raft, and yet it is far safer than the canoe. It is, in fact, so strong that it allows a mast to be erected on it. A stout pole is merely thrust into the centre of the reedy mass, and remains fixed without the assistance of stays. To this mast is fastened a long rope, by means of which the raft can be moored when the voyagers wish to land. One great advantage of the raft is, the extreme ease with which it is made. Three or four skilful men can in the course of an hour build a raft which is strong enough to bear them and all their baggage.

The canoes are always kept fastened to the raft, so that the crew can go ashore whenever they like, though they do not seem to tow or guide the raft, which is simply allowed to float down the stream, and steers itself without the aid of a rudder. Should it meet with any obstacle, it only swings round and disentangles itself; and the chief difficulty in its management is its aptitude to become entangled in overhanging branches.

Such a raft as this is much used in the chase of the hippopotamus. It looks like a mere mass of reeds floating down the stream, and does not alarm the wary animal as

much as a boat would be likely to do. When the natives use the raft in pursuit of the hippopotamus, they always haul their canoes upon it, so that they are ready to be launched in pursuit of the buoy as soon as the animal is struck.

The same tribes use reeds if they wish to cross the river. They cut a quantity of them, and throw them into the river as if they were going to make a raft. They then twist up some of the reeds at each corner, so as to look like small posts, and connect these posts by means of sticks or long reeds, by way of bulwarks. In this primitive ferry-boat the man seats himself, and is able to carry as much luggage as he likes, the simple bulwarks preventing it from falling overboard.

It is rather a strange thing that a Makololo cannot be induced to plant the mango tree, the men having imbibed the notion from other tribes among whom they had been travelling. They are exceedingly fond of its fruit, as well they may be, it being excellent, and supplying the natives with food for several weeks, while it may be plucked in tolerable abundance during four months of the year. Yet all the trees are self-planted, the natives believing that any one who plants one of these trees will soon die. This superstition is prevalent throughout the whole of this part of Africa, the Batoka being almost the only tribe among whom it does not prevail.

The Makololo have contrived to make themselves victims to a wonderful number of superstitions. This is likely enough, seeing that they are essentially usurpers, having swept through a vast number of tribes, and settled themselves in the country of the vanquished. Now, there is nothing more contagious than superstition, and, in such a case, the superstitions of the conquered tribes are sure to be added to those of the victors.

The idea that certain persons can change themselves into the forms of animals prevails among them. One of these potent conjurers came to Dr. Livingstone's party, and began to shake and tremble in every limb as he approached. The Makololo explained that the Pondoro, as these men are called, smelled the gunpowder, and, on account of his leonine habits, he was very much afraid of it. The interpreter was asked to offer the Pondoro a bribe of a cloth to change himself into a lion forthwith, but the man declined to give the message, through genuine fear that the transformation might really take place.

The Pondoro in question was really a clever man. He used to go off into the woods for a month at a time, during which period he was supposed to be a lion. His wife had built him a hut under the shade of a baobab tree, and used to bring him regular supplies of food and beer, his leonine appetite being supposed to be subsidiary to that which belonged to him as a human being. No one is allowed to enter this hut except the Pondoro and his wife, and not even the chief will venture so much as to rest his weapons against the baobab tree; and so strictly is this rule observed that the chief of the village wished to inflict a fine on some of Dr. Livingstone's party, because they had placed their guns against the sacred hut.

Sometimes the Pondoro is believed to be hunting for the benefit of the village, catching and killing game as a lion, and then resuming his human form, and telling the people where the dead animal is lying.

There is also among these tribes a belief that the spirits of departed chiefs enter the bodies of lions, and this belief may probably account for the fear which they feel when opposed to a lion, and their unwillingness to attack the animal. In Livingstone's "Zaïmbesi and its Tributaries," there is a passage which well illustrates the prevalence of this feeling.

"On one occasion, when we had shot a buffalo in the path beyond the Kapie, a hungry lion, attracted probably by the smell of the meat, came close to our camp, and roused up all hands by his roaring. Tuba Moroko (the 'Canoe-smasher') imbued with the popular belief that the beast was a chief in disguise, scolded him roundly during his brief intervals of silence. 'You a chief! Eh! You call yourself a chief, do you? What kind of a chief are you, to come sneaking about in the dark, trying to steal our buffalo meat? Are you not ashamed of yourself? A pretty chief, truly! You are like the scavenger-beetle, and think of yourself only. You have not the heart of a chief; why don't you kill your own beef! You must have a stone in your chest, and no heart at all, indeed.'"

The "Canoe-smasher" producing no effect by his impassioned outcry, the lion was addressed by another man named Malonga, the most sedate and taciturn of the party. "In his slow, quiet way he expostulated with him on the impropriety of such conduct to strangers who had never injured him. 'We were travelling peaceably through the country back to our own chief. We never killed people, nor stole anything. The buffalo-meat was ours, not his, and it did not become a great chief like him to be prowling about in the dark, trying, like a hyena, to steal the meat of strangers. He might go and hunt for himself, as there was plenty of game in the forest.' The Pondoro being deaf to reason, and only roaring the louder, the men became angry, and threatened to send a ball through him if he did not go away. They snatched up their guns to shoot him, but he prudently kept in the dark, outside of the luminous circle made by our camp fires, and there they did not like to venture."

Another superstition is very prevalent among these tribes. It is to the effect that every animal is specially affected by an appropriate medicine. Ordinary medicines are prepared by the regular witch-doctors, of whom there are plenty; but special medicines require special professionals. One man, for example, takes as his specialty the preparation of elephant medicine, and no hunter will go after the elephant without providing himself with some of the potent medicine. Another makes crocodile medicine, the use of which is to protect its owner from the crocodile. On one occasion, when the white men had shot a crocodile as it lay basking in the sun, the doctors came in wrath, and remonstrated with their visitors for shooting an animal which they looked upon as their special property. On another occasion, when a baited hook was laid for the crocodile, the doctors removed the bait, partly because it was a dog, and they preferred to eat it themselves, and partly because any diminution in the number of crocodiles would cause a corresponding loss of fees.

Then since the introduction of firearms there are gun-doctors, who make medicines that enable the gun to shoot straight. Sulphur is the usual gun-medicine, and is mostly administered by making little incisions in the hands, and rubbing the sulphur into them. Magic dice are also used, and are chiefly employed for the discovery of thieves. Even the white men have come to believe in the efficacy of the dice, and the native conjuror is consulted as often by the Portuguese as by his own countrymen.

2.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE BATOKA AND MANGANJA TRIBES.

LOCALITY OF THE BATOKA—THEIR GENERAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS—THEIR SKILL AS BOATMEN—THE BAKENDA-PRZI, OR GO-NAKEDS—AGRICULTURE—MODE OF HUNTING—MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS—WAR CUSTOMS—THE MANGANJA TRIBE—GOVERNMENT—INDUSTRY OF BOTH SEXES—SALUTATION—DRESS—THE PELELE, OR LIP-RING—TATTOOING—WANT OF CLEANLINESS—BEER-BREWING AND DRINKING—EXCHANGING NAMES—SUPERSTITIONS—FUNERAL AND MOURNING.

SOMEWHERE about lat. 17° S. and long. 27° E. is a tribe called the Batoka, or Batonga, of which there are two distinct varieties; of whom those who live on low-lying lands, such as the banks of the Zambesi, are very dark, and somewhat resemble the negro in appearance, while those of the higher lands are light brown, much of the same hue as *cafè au lait*. Their character seems to differ with their complexions, the former variety being dull, stupid, and intractable, while the latter are comparatively intellectual.

They do not improve their personal appearance by an odd habit of depriving themselves of their two upper incisor teeth. The want of these teeth makes the corresponding incisors of the lower jaw project outwards, and to force the lip with them; so that even in youth they all have an aged expression of countenance. Knocking out these teeth is part of a ceremony which is practised on both sexes when they are admitted into the ranks of men and women, and is probably the remains of some religious rite. The reason which they give is absurd enough, namely, that they like to resemble oxen, which have no upper incisors, and not to have all their teeth like zebras. It is probable, however, that this statement may be merely intended as an evasion of questions which they think themselves bound to parry, but which may also have reference to the extreme veneration for oxen which prevails in an African's mind.

In spite of its disfiguring effect, the custom is universal among the various sub-tribes of which the Batoka are composed, and not even the definite commands of the chief himself, nor the threats of punishment, could induce the people to forego it. Girls and lads would suddenly make their appearance without their teeth, and no amount of questioning could induce them to state when, and by whom, they were knocked out. Fourteen or fifteen is the usual age for performing the operation.

Their dress is not a little remarkable, especially the mode in which some of them arrange their hair. The hair on the top of the head is drawn and plastered together in a circle some six or seven inches in diameter. By dint of careful training, and plenty of grease and other appliances, it is at last formed into a cone some eight or ten inches in height, and slightly leaning forward. In some cases the cone is of wonderful height, the head-man of a Batoka village wearing one which was trained into a long spike which projected a full yard from his head, and which must have caused him considerable inconvenience. In this case other materials were evidently mixed with the

hair; and it is said that the long hair of various animals is often added, so as to mingle with the real growth, and aid in raising the edifice. Around the edges of this cone the hair is shaven closely, so that the appearance of the head is very remarkable, and somewhat ludicrous.

The figures of the accompanying illustration are portraits by Mr. Baines. Mantanyani, the man who is sitting on the edge of the boat, was a rather remarkable man. He really belongs to the Batoka tribe, though he was thought at first to be one of the Makololo. Perhaps he thought it better to assume the membership of the victorious than the conquered tribe. This was certainly the case with many of the men who, like Mantanyani,



BATOKA MEN.

accompanied Dr. Livingstone. He was a singularly skilful boatman, and managed an ordinary whaling boat as easily as one of his own canoes. The ornament which he wears in his hair is a comb made of bamboo. It was not manufactured by himself, but was taken from Shimbesi's tribe on the Shire, or Sheereh, river. He and his companions forced the boat up the many rapids, and, on being interrogated as to the danger, he said that he had no fears, for that he could swim like a fish, and that if by any mischance he should allow Mr. Baines to fall overboard and be drowned, he should never dare to show his face to Dr. Livingstone again.

Mr. Baines remarks in his MS. notes, that Mantanyani ought to have made a good sailor, for he was not only an adept at the management of boats, but could appreciate rum as well as any British tar. It so happened that at night, after the day's boating was over, grog was served out to the men, and yet for two or three nights Mantanyani would not touch it. Accordingly one night the following colloquy took place:—

"Mantanyani, non quero grog?" (*i.e.* Cannot you take grog?)

"Non quero." (I cannot.)

"Porquoi non quero grog?" (Why cannot you take grog?)

"Garaffa poco, Zambesi munta." (The bottle is little and the Zambesi is big.)

The hint was taken, and rum unmixed with water was offered to Mantanyani, who drank it off like a sailor.

A spirited account of the skill of the natives in managing canoes is given in "The Zambesi and its Tributaries." The canoe belonged to a man named Tuba-Mokoro, or the "Canoe-smasher," a rather ominous, but apparently undeserved, title, inasmuch as he proved to be a most skilful and steady boatman. He seemed also to be modest, for he took no credit to himself for his management, but attributed his success entirely to a certain charm or medicine which he had, and which he kept a profound secret. He was employed to take the party through the rapids to an island close to the edge of the great Mosi-oa-tunya, *i.e.* Smoke Sounding Falls, now called the Victoria Falls. This island can only be reached when the water happens to be very low, and, even in that case, none but the most experienced boatmen can venture so near to the Fall, which is double the depth of Niagara, and a mile in width, formed entirely by a vast and sudden rift in the basaltic bed of the Zambesi.

"Before entering the race of water, we were requested not to speak, as our talking might diminish the value of the medicine, and no one with such boiling eddying rapids before his eyes would think of disobeying the orders of a 'canoe-smasher.' It soon became evident that there was sound sense in the request of Tuba's, though the reason assigned was not unlike that of the canoe man from Sesheke, who begged one of our party not to whistle, because whistling made the wind come.

"It was the duty of the man at the bow to look out ahead for the proper course, and when he saw a rock or a snag to call out to the steersman. Tuba doubtless thought that talking on board might divert the attention of his steersman at a time when the neglect of an order, or a slight mistake, would be sure to spill us all into the chafing river. There were places where the utmost exertions of both men had to be put forth in order to force the canoe to the only safe part of the rapid and to prevent it from sweeping broadside on, when in a twinkling we should have found ourselves among the plotuses and cormorants which were engaged in diving for their breakfast of small fish.

"At times it seemed as if nothing could save us from dashing in our headlong race against the rocks, which, now that the river was low, jutted out of the water; but, just at the very nick of time, Tuba passed the word to the steersman, and then, with ready pole, turned the canoe a little aside, and we glided swiftly past the threatened danger. Never was canoe more admirably managed. Once only did the medicine seem to have lost something of its efficacy.

"We were driving swiftly down, a black rock over which the white foam flew lay directly in our path, the pole was planted against it as readily as ever, but it slipped just as Tuba put forth his strength to turn the bow off. We struck hard, and were half full of water in a moment. Tuba recovered himself as speedily, shoved off the bow, and shot the canoe into a still, shallow place, to bale the water out. He gave us to understand that it was not the medicine which was at fault—that had lost none of its virtue; the accident was owing to Tuba having started without his breakfast. Need it be said that we never let Tuba go without that meal again."

Among them there is a body of men called in their own language the "Baenda-pezi," *i.e.* the Go-nakeds. These men never wear an atom of any kind of clothing, but are entirely naked, their only coat being one of red ochre.

These Baenda-pezi are rather a remarkable set of men, and why they should voluntarily live without clothing is not very evident. Some travellers think that they are a separate order among the Batoka, but this is not at all certain. It is not that they are devoid of vanity, for they are extremely fond of ornaments upon their heads, which they dress in various fantastic ways. The conical style has already been mentioned, but they have many other fashions. One of their favourite modes is, to plait a fillet of bark, some two inches wide, and tie it round the head in diadem fashion. They then rub grease and

red ochre plentifully into the hair, and fasten it to the fillet, which it completely covers. The head being then shaved as far as the edge of the fillet, the native looks as if he were wearing a red, polished forage-cap.

Rings of iron wire and beads are worn round the arms; and a fashionable member of this order thinks himself scarcely fit for society unless he carries a pipe and a small pair of iron tongs, with which to lift a coal from the fire and kindle his pipe, the stem of which is often ornamented by being bound with polished iron wire.

The Baenda-pezi seem to be as devoid of the sense of shame as their bodies are of covering. They could not in the least be made to see that they ought to wear clothing, and quite laughed at the absurdity of such an idea; evidently looking on a proposal to wear clothing much as we should entertain a request to dress ourselves in plate armour.

The pipe is in constant requisition among these men, who are seldom seen without a pipe in their mouths, and never without it in their possession. Yet, whenever they



BATOKA SALUTATION.

came into the presence of their white visitors, they always asked permission before lighting their pipes, an innate politeness being strong within them. Their tobacco is exceedingly powerful, and on that account is much valued by other tribes, who will travel great distances to purchase it from the Batoka. It is also very cheap, a few beads purchasing a sufficient quantity to last even these inveterate smokers for six months. Their mode of smoking is very peculiar. They first take a whiff after the usual manner, and puff out the smoke. But, when they have expelled nearly the whole of the smoke, they make a kind of catch at the last tiny wreath, and swallow it. This they are pleased to consider the very essence or spirit of the tobacco, which is lost if the smoke is exhaled in the usual manner.

The Batoka are a polite people in their way, though they have rather an odd method of expressing their feelings. The ordinary mode of salutation is for the women to clap their hands and produce that ululating sound which has already been mentioned, and for the men to stoop and clap their hands on their hips.

But, when they wish to be especially respectful, they have another mode of salutation. They throw themselves on their backs, and roll from side to side, slapping the outside of their thighs vigorously, and calling out "Kina-bomba! kina-bomba!" with great energy.

Dr. Livingstone says that he never could accustom his eyes to like the spectacle of great naked men wallowing on their backs and slapping themselves, and tried to stop them. They, however, always thought that he was not satisfied with the heartiness of his reception, and so rolled about and slapped themselves all the more vigorously. This rolling and slapping seems to be reserved for the welcoming of great men, and, of course, whenever the Batoka present themselves before the chief, the performance is doubly vigorous.

When a gift is presented, it is etiquette for the donor to hold the present in one hand, and to slap the thigh with the other, as he approaches the person to whom he is about to give it. He then delivers the gift, claps his hands together, sits down, and then strikes his thighs with both hands. The same formalities are observed when a return gift is presented; and so tenacious are they of this branch of etiquette, that it is taught regularly to children by their parents.

They are an industrious people, cultivating wonderfully large tracts of land with the simple but effective hoe of their country. With this hoe, which looks something like a large adze, they not only break up the ground, but perform other tasks of less importance, such as smoothing the earth as a foundation for their beds. Some of these fields are so large, that the traveller may walk for hours through the native corn, and scarcely come upon an uncultivated spot. The quantity of corn which is grown is very large, and the natives make such numbers of granaries, that their villages seem to be far more populous than is really the case. Plenty, in consequence, reigns among this people. But it is a rather remarkable fact that, in spite of the vast quantities of grain which they produce, they cannot keep it in store.

The corn has too many enemies. In the first place, the neighbouring tribes are apt to send out marauding parties, who prefer stealing the corn which their industrious neighbours have grown and stored to cultivating the ground for themselves. Mice, too, are very injurious to the corn. But against these two enemies the Batoka can tolerably guard, by tying up quantities of corn in bundles of grass, plastering them over with clay, and hiding them in the low sand islands left by the subsiding waters of the Zambesi. But the worst of all enemies is the native weevil, an insect so small that no precautions are available against its ravages, and which, as we too often find in this country, destroys an enormous amount of corn in a very short time. It is impossible for the Batoka to preserve their corn more than a year, and it is as much as they can do to make it last until the next crop is ready.

As, therefore, the whole of the annual crop must be consumed by themselves or the weevil, they prefer the former, and what they cannot eat they make into beer, which they brew in large quantities, and drink abundantly; yet they seldom, if ever, intoxicate themselves, in spite of the quantities which they consume. This beer is called by them either "boala" or "pombe," just as we speak of beer or ale; and it is sweet in flavour, with just enough acidity to render it agreeable. Even Europeans soon come to like it, and its effect on the natives is to make them plump and well nourished. The Batoka do not content themselves with simply growing corn and vegetables, but even plant fruit and oil-bearing trees—a practice which is not found among the other tribes.

Possibly on account of the plenty with which their land is blessed, they are a most hospitable race of men, always glad to see guests, and receiving them in the kindest manner. If a traveller passes through a village, he is continually hailed from the various huts with invitations to eat and drink, while the men welcome the visitor by clapping their hands, and the women by "lullilooing." They even feel pained if the stranger passes the village without being entertained. When he halts in a village for the night, the inhabitants turn out to make him comfortable; some running to fetch firewood, others bringing jars of water, while some engage themselves in preparing the bed, and erecting a fence to keep off the wind.

They are skilful and fearless hunters, and are not afraid even of the elephant or buffalo, going up closely to these formidable animals, and killing them with large spears. A complete system of game-laws is in operation among the Batoka, not for the purpose of prohibiting the chase of certain game, but in order to settle the disposal of the game when killed. Among them, the man who inflicts the first wound on an animal has the right to

the spoil, no matter how trifling may be the wound which he inflicts. In case he does not kill the animal himself, he is bound to give to the hunter who inflicts the fatal wound both legs of one side.

As to the laws which regulate ordinary life, there is but little that calls for special notice, except a sort of ordeal for which they have a great veneration. This is called the ordeal of the Muave, and is analogous to the corsned and similar ordeals of the early ages of this country. The dread of witchcraft is very strong here, as in other parts of Southern Africa; but among the Batoka the accused has the opportunity of clearing himself by drinking a poisonous preparation called muave. Sometimes the accused dies from the draught, and in that case his guilt is clear; but in others the poison acts as an emetic, which is supposed to prove his innocence, the poison finding no congenial evil in the body, and therefore being rejected.

No one seems to be free from such an accusation, as is clear from Dr. Livingstone's account: "Near the confluence of the Kapoe the Mambo, or chief, with some of his headmen, came to our sleeping-place with a present. Their foreheads were smeared with white flour, and an unusual seriousness marked their demeanour. Shortly before our arrival they had been accused of witchcraft: conscious of innocence, they accepted the ordeal, and undertook to drink the poisoned muave. For this purpose they made a journey to the sacred hill of Nehomokela, on which repose the bodies of their ancestors, and, after a solemn appeal to the unseen spirit to attest the innocence of their children, they swallowed the muave, vomited, and were therefore declared not guilty.

"It is evident that they believe that the soul has a continued existence, and that the spirits of the departed know what those they have left behind are doing, and are pleased or not, according as their deeds are good or evil. This belief is universal. The owner of a large canoe refused to sell it because it belonged to the spirit of his father, who helped him when he killed the hippopotamus. Another, when the bargain for his canoe was nearly completed, seeing a large serpent on a branch of a tree overhead, refused to complete the sale, alleging that this was the spirit of his father, come to protest against it."

Some of the Batoka believe that a medicine could be prepared which would cure the bite of the tsetse, that small but terrible fly which makes such destruction among the cattle, but has no hurtful influence on mankind. This medicine was discovered by a chief, whose son Moyara showed it to Dr. Livingstone. It consisted chiefly of a plant, which was apparently new to botanical science. The root was peeled, and the peel sliced and reduced to powder, together with a dozen or two of the tsetse themselves. The remainder of the plant is also dried. When an animal shows symptoms of being bitten by the tsetse, some of the powder is administered to the animal, and the rest of the dried plant is burned under it so as to fumigate it thoroughly. Moyara did not assert that the remedy was infallible, but only stated that if a herd of cattle were to stray into a district infested with the tsetse, some of them would be saved by the use of the medicine, whereas they would all die without it.

The Batoka are fond of using a musical instrument that prevails, with some modifications, over a considerable portion of Central Africa.

In its simplest form it consists of a board, on which are fixed a number of flat wooden strips, which, when pressed down and suddenly released, produce a kind of musical tone. In fact, the principle of the sansa is exactly that of our musical-boxes, the only difference being that the teeth, or keys, of our instrument are steel, and that they are sounded by little pegs, and not by the fingers. Even among this one tribe there are great differences in the formation of the sansa.

The best and most elaborate form is that which is shown on page 392. The sounding-board of the sansa is hollow, in order to increase the resonance; and the keys are made of iron instead of wood, so that a really musical sound is produced. Moreover, the instrument is enclosed in a hollow calabash, for the purpose of intensifying the sound; and both the sansa and the calabash are furnished with bits of steel and tin, which make a jingling accompaniment to the music. The calabash is generally covered with carvings. When the sansa is used, it is held with the hollow or ornamented end towards the player,

and the keys are struck with the thumbs, the rest of the hand being occupied in holding the instrument.

This curious instrument is used in accompanying songs. Dr. Livingstone mentions that a genuine native poet attached himself to the party, and composed a poem in honour of the white men, singing it whenever they halted, and accompanying himself on the sansa. At first, as he did not know very much about his subject, he modestly curtailed his poem, but extended it day by day, until at last it became quite a long ode. There was an evident rhythm in it, each line consisting of five syllables. Another native poet was in the habit of solacing himself every evening with an extempore song, in which he enumerated everything that the white men had done. He was not so accomplished a poet as his brother improvisatore, and occasionally found words to fail him. However, his sansa helped him when he was at a loss for a word, just as the piano helps out

an unskilful singer when at a loss for a note. The specimen of the sansa given in the illustration is in the collection of Colonel Lane Fox.



THE SANSA.

They have several musical instruments beside the sansa. One is called the marimba, and is in fact a simple sort of harmonicon, the place of the glass or metal keys being supplied by strips of hard wood fixed on a frame. These strips are large at one end of the instrument, and diminish regularly towards the other. Under each of the wooden keys is fixed a hollow gourd, or calahash, the

object of which is to increase the resonance. Two sticks of hard wood are used for striking the keys, and a skilful performer really handles them with wonderful agility.

Simple as is this instrument, pleasing sounds can be produced from it. It has even been introduced into England, under the name of "xylophone," and, when played by a dexterous and energetic performer, really produces effects that could hardly have been expected from it. The sounds are, of course, deficient in musical tone; but still the various notes can be obtained with tolerable accuracy by trimming the wooden keys to the proper dimensions. A similar instrument is made with strips of stone, the sounds of which are superior to those produced by the wooden bars.

The Batoka are remarkable for their clannish feeling; and when a large party are travelling in company, those of one tribe always keep together, and assist each other in every difficulty. Also, if they should happen to come upon a village or dwelling belonging to one of their own tribe, they are sure of a welcome and plentiful hospitality.

The Batoka appear from all accounts to be rather a contentious people, quarrelsome at home, and sometimes extending their strife to other villages. In domestic fights—i.e. in combats between inhabitants of the same village—the antagonists are careful not to inflict fatal injuries. But when village fights against village, as is sometimes the case, the loss on both sides may be considerable. The result of such a battle would be exceedingly disagreeable, as the two villages would always be in a state of deadly feud, and an inhabitant of one would not dare to go near the other.

The Batoka, however, have invented a plan by which the feud is stopped. When the victors have driven their opponents off the field, they take the body of one of the dead warriors, quarter it, and perform a series of ceremonies over it. This appears to be a kind of challenge that they are masters of the field. The conquered party acknowledge their defeat by sending a deputation to ask for the body of their comrade, and, when they receive it, they go through the same ceremonies; after which peace is supposed to be restored, and the inhabitants of the villages may visit each other in safety.

Dr. Livingstone's informant further said, that when a warrior had slain an enemy, he took the head, and placed it on an ant-hill, until all the flesh was taken from the bones. He then removed the lower jaw, and wore it as a trophy. He did not see one of these trophies worn, and evidently thinks that the above account may be inaccurate in some places, as it was given through an interpreter; and it is very possible that both the interpreter and the Batoka might have invented a tale for the occasion. The account of the pacificatory ceremonies really seems to be too consistent with itself to be falsehood; but the wearing of the enemy's jaw, uncorroborated by a single example, seems to be rather doubtful.

Indeed, Dr. Livingstone expressly warns the reader against receiving with implicit belief accounts that are given by a native African. The dark interlocutor amiably desires to please, and, having no conception of truth as a principle, says exactly what he thinks will be most acceptable to the great white chief, on whom he looks as a sort of erratic supernatural being. Ask a native whether the mountains in his own district are lofty, or whether gold is found there, and he will assuredly answer in the affirmative. So he will if he be asked whether unicorns live in his country, or whether he knows of a race of tailed men, being only anxious to please, and not thinking that the truth or falsehood of the answer can be of the least consequence. If the white sportsman shoots at an animal, and makes a palpable miss, his dusky attendants are sure to say that the bullet went through the animal's heart, and that it only bounded away for a short distance. "He is our father," say the natives, "and he would be displeased if we told him that he had missed." It is even worse with the slaves, who are often used as interpreters; and it is hardly possible to induce them to interpret with any modicum of truth.

THE MANGANJA TRIBE.

ON the River Shire (pronounced Sheereh), a northern tributary of the Zambesi, there is a rather curious tribe called the Manganja. The country which they inhabit is well and fully watered, abounding in clear and cool streams, which do not dry up even in the dry season. Pasturage is consequently abundant, and yet the people do not trouble themselves about cattle, allowing to lie unused tracts of land which would feed vast herds of oxen, not to mention sheep and goats.

Their mode of government is rather curious, and yet simple. The country is divided into a number of districts, the head of which goes by the title of Rundo. A great number of villages are under the command of each Rundo, though each of the divisions is independent of the others, and they do not acknowledge one common chief or king. The chieftainship is not restricted to the male sex, as in one of the districts a woman named Nyango was the Rundo, and exercised her authority judiciously, by improving the social status of the women throughout her dominions. An annual tribute is paid to the Rundo by each village, mostly consisting of one tusk of each elephant killed, and he in return is bound to assist and protect them should they be threatened or attacked.

The Manganjas are an industrious race, being good workers in metal, especially iron, growing cotton, making baskets, and cultivating the ground, in which occupation both sexes equally share; and it is a pleasant thing to see men, women, and children all at work together in the fields, with perhaps the baby lying asleep in the shadow of a bush.

They clear the forest ground exactly as is done in America, cutting down the trees with their axes, piling up the branches and trunks in heaps, burning them, and scattering

the ashes over the ground by way of manure. The stumps are left to rot in the ground, and the corn is sown among them. Grass-land is cleared in a different manner. The grass in that country is enormously thick and long. The cultivator gathers a bundle into his hands, twists the ends together, and ties them in a knot. He then cuts the roots with his adze-like hoe, so as to leave the bunch of grass still standing, like a sheaf of wheat. When a field has been entirely cut, it looks to a stranger as if it were in harvest, the bundles of grass standing at intervals like the grain shocks. Just before the rainy season comes on the bundles are fired, the ashes are roughly dug into the soil, and an abundant harvest is the result.

The cotton is prepared after a very simple and slow fashion, the fibre being picked by hand, drawn out into a "roving," partially twisted, and then rolled up into a ball. It is the opinion of those who have had practical experience of this cotton, that, if the natives could be induced to plant and dress it in large quantities, an enormous market might be found for it. The "staple," or fibre, of this cotton is not so long as that which comes from America, and has a harsh, woolly feeling in the hand. But, as it is very strong, and the fabrics made from it are very durable, the natives prefer it to the foreign plant. Almost every Manganja family of importance has its own little cotton patch, from half an acre to an acre in size, which is kept carefully tended, and free from weeds.

The loom in which they weave their simple cloth is very rude, and is one of the primitive forms of a weaver's apparatus. It is placed horizontally, and not vertically, and the weaver has to squat on the ground when engaged in his work. The shuttle is a mere stick, with the thread wound spirally round it, and, when it is passed between the crossed threads of the warp, the warp is beaten into its place with a flat stick.

They are a hospitable people, and have a well-understood code of ceremony in the reception of strangers. In each village there is a spot called the *Boala*, i.e. a space of about thirty or forty yards diameter, which is sheltered by baobab, or other spreading trees, and which is always kept neat and clean. This is chiefly used as a place where the basket-makers and others who are engaged in sedentary occupations can work in company, and also serves as a meeting-place in evenings, where they sing, dance, smoke, and drink beer after the toils of the day.

As soon as a stranger enters a village, he is conducted to the *Boala*, where he takes his seat on the mats that are spread for him, and awaits the coming of the chief man of the village. As soon as he makes his appearance, his people welcome him by clapping their hands in unison, and continue this salutation until he has taken his seat, accompanied by his councillors. "Our guides," writes Livingstone, "then sit down in front of the chief and his councillors, and both parties lean forward, looking earnestly at each other. The chief repeats a word, such as 'Ambuiata' (our father, or master), or 'Moio' (life), and all clap their hands. Another word is followed by two claps, a third by still more clapping, when each touches the ground with both hands placed together. Then all rise, and lean forward with measured clap, and sit down again with clap, clap, clap, fainter and still fainter, until the last dies away, or is brought to an end, by a smart loud clap from the chief. They keep perfect time in this species of court etiquette."

This curious salutation is valued very highly, and the people are carefully instructed in it from childhood. The chief guide of the stranger party then addresses the chief, and tells him about his visitors—who they are, why they have come, &c.; and mostly does so in a kind of blank verse—the power of improvising a poetical narrative being valued as highly as the court salutations, and sedulously cultivated by all of any pretensions to station. It is rather amusing at first to the traveller to find that, if he should happen to inquire his way at a hut, his own guide addresses the owner of the hut in blank verse, and is answered in the same fashion.

The dress of this tribe is rather peculiar, the head being the chief part of the person which is decorated. Some of the men save themselves the trouble of dressing their hair by shaving it off entirely, but a greater number take a pride in decorating it in various ways. The head-dress which seems to be most admired is that in which the hair is trained to resemble the horns of the buffalo. This is done by taking two pieces of hide while they are wet and pliable, and bending them into the required shape. When the two

horns are dry and hard, they are fastened on the head, and the hair is trained over them, and fixed in its place by grease and clay. Sometimes only one horn is used, which projects immediately over the forehead; but the double horn is the form which is most in vogue.

Others divide their hair into numerous tufts, and separate them by winding round each tuft a thin bandage, made of the inner bark of a tree, so that they radiate from the head in all directions, and produce an effect which is much valued by this simple race. Some draw the hair together towards the back of the head, and train it so as to hang down their backs in a shape closely resembling the pigtail which was so fashionable an ornament of the British sailor in Nelson's time. Others, again, allow the hair to grow much as nature formed it, but train it to grow in heavy masses all round their heads.

The women are equally fastidious with the men, but have in addition a most singular ornament called the "pelele."

This is a ring that is not fixed into the ear or nose, but into the upper lip, and gives to the wearer an appearance that is most repulsive to an European. The pelele is a ring made of ivory, metal, or bamboo, nearly an inch in thickness, and variable in diameter,



PELELE, OR LIP-RING.

sometimes measuring two inches across. When the girl is very young, the upper lip is pierced close to the nose, and a small pin inserted to prevent the orifice from closing. When the wound is healed, the small pin is withdrawn, and a larger one introduced; and this plan is carried on for years, until at last the full-sized "pelele" can be worn.

The commonest sort of pelele is made of bamboo, and is in consequence very light. When a wearer of this pelele smiles, or rather tries to smile, the contraction of the muscles turns the ring upwards, so that its upper edge comes in front of the eyes, the nose appearing through its middle. The whole front teeth are exposed by this motion, so as to exhibit the fashionable way in which the teeth have been chipped, so that, as Livingstone says, they resemble the fangs of a cat or a crocodile. One old lady, named Chikanda Kadze, had a pelele so wide and heavy that it hung below her chin. But then she was a chief, and could consequently afford to possess so valuable an ornament.

The use of the pelele quite alters the natural shape of the jaws. In the natural state

the teeth of the upper jaw are set in an outward curve, but in a wearer of the *pelele* the constant, though slight, pressure of the ring first diminishes the curve, then flattens it, and, lastly, reverses it. Livingstone suggests that a similar application of gradual pressure should be applied to persons whose teeth project forwards, not knowing that such a plan has long been practised by dentists.

How this frightful ornament came to be first introduced is unknown. The reasons which they give for wearing it are rather amusing. A man, say they, has whiskers and a beard, whereas a woman has none. "What kind of a creature would a woman be, without whiskers and without the *pelele*? She would have a mouth like a man, and no beard!" As a natural result of wearing this instrument, the language has undergone a modification as well as the lips. The labial letters cannot be pronounced properly, the under lip having the whole duty thrown upon them.

In different parts of the country the *pelele* takes different shapes. The most valued *pelele* is a piece of pure tin hammered into a dish-like shape. Some are made of a red kind of pipeclay, and others of a white quartz. These latter ornaments are generally cylindrical in form, so that, as has been well observed, the wearer looks as if she had an inch or so of wax-candle thrust through the lips, and projecting beyond the nose. Some of them are so determined to be fashionable that they do not content themselves with a *pelele* in the upper lip, but also wear one in the lower, the effect upon the expression of countenance being better imagined than described.

The *pelele* is seen to the greatest advantage in the lake district, where every woman wears it, and where it takes the greatest variety of form. Along the river it is not so universally worn, and the form is almost always that of the ring or dish.

In this part of the country the sub-tribes are distinguished by certain marks where-with they tattoo themselves, and thereby succeed in still farther disfiguring countenances which, if allowed to remain untouched, would be agreeable enough. Some of them have a fashion of pricking holes all over their faces, and treating the wounds in such a way that, when they heal, the skin is raised in little knobs, so that the face looks as if it were covered with warts. Add to this fashion the *pelele*, and the reader may form an opinion of the beauty of a fashionable woman. If the object of fashion be to conceal age, this must be a most successful fashion, as it entirely destroys the lines of the countenance, and hardens and distorts the features to such an extent, that it is difficult to judge by the face whether the owner be sixteen or sixty.

One of the women had her body most curiously adorned by tattooing, and, indeed, was a remarkable specimen of Manganja fashion.

She had shaved all her head, and supplied the want of hair by a feather tuft over her forehead, tied on by a band. From a point on the top of her forehead ran lines radiating over the cheeks as far as the ear, looking something like the marks on a New Zealander's face. This radiating principle was carried out all over her body. A similar point was marked on each shoulder blade, from which the lines radiated down the back and over the shoulders; and on the lower part of the spine and on each arm were other patterns of a similar nature.

She of course wore the *pelele*; but she seemed ashamed of it, probably because she was a travelled woman, and had seen white men before. So when she was about to speak to them, she retired to her hut, removed the *pelele*, and, while speaking, held her hand before her mouth, so as to conceal the ugly aperture in her lip.

Cleanliness seems to be unsuitable to the Manganja constitution. They could not in the least understand why travellers should wash themselves, and seemed to be personally ignorant of the process. One very old man, however, said that he did remember once to have washed himself; but that it was so long ago that he had quite forgotten how he felt.

A very amusing use was once made of this antipathy to cold water. One of the Manganzas took a fancy to attach himself to the expedition, and nothing could drive him away. He insisted on accompanying them, and annoyed them greatly by proclaiming in every village to which they came, "These people have wandered; they do not know where they are going." He was driven off repeatedly; but, as soon as the march was

resumed, there he was, with his little bag over his shoulder, ready to proclaim the wandering propensities of the strangers, as usual. At last a happy idea struck them. They threatened to take him down to the river and wash him; whereupon he made off in a fright, and never made his appearance again.

Perhaps in consequence of this uncleanness, skin diseases are rife among the Manganjas, and appear to be equally contagious and durable; many persons having white blotches over their bodies, and many others being afflicted with a sort of leprosy, which, however, does not seem to trouble them particularly. Even the fowls are liable to a similar disease, and have their feet deformed by a thickening of the skin.

Sobriety seems as rare with the Manganjas as cleanliness; for they are notable toppers, and actually contrive to intoxicate themselves on their native beer, a liquid of so exceedingly mild a character that nothing but strong determination and a capability of consuming vast quantities of liquid would produce the desired effect. The beer is totally unlike our English drink. In the first place, it is quite thick and opaque, and looks much like gruel of a pinkish hue. It is made by pounding the vegetating grain, mixing it with water, boiling it, and allowing it to ferment. When it is about two days old, it is pleasant enough, having a slightly sweetish-acid flavour, which has the property of immediately quenching thirst, and is therefore most valuable to the traveller, for whose refreshment the hospitable people generally produce it.

As to themselves, there is some excuse for their intemperate habits. They do not possess hops, or any other substance that will preserve the beer, and in consequence they are obliged to consume the whole brewing within a day or two. When, therefore, a chief has a great brew of beer, the people assemble, and by day and night they continue drinking, drumming, dancing, and feasting, until the whole of the beer is gone.

Yet, probably on account of the nourishing qualities of the beer—which is, in fact, little more than very thin porridge,—the excessive drinking does not seem to have any injurious effect on the people, many being seen who were evidently very old, and yet who had been accustomed to drink beer in the usual quantities.

The women seem to appreciate the beer as well as the men, though they do not appear to be so liable to intoxication. Perhaps the reason for this comparative temperance is, that their husbands do not give them enough of it. In their dispositions they seem to be lively and agreeable, and have a peculiarly merry laugh, which seems to proceed from the heart, and is not in the least like the senseless laugh of the Western negro.

In this part of the country, not only among the Manganjas, but in other tribes, the custom of changing names is prevalent, and sometimes leads to odd results. One day a head-man named Sininyane was called as usual, but made no answer; nor did a third and fourth call produce any effect. At last one of his men replied that he was no longer Sininyane, but Moshoshama, and to that name he at once responded. It then turned out that he had exchanged names with a Zulu. The object of the exchange is, that the two persons are thenceforth bound to consider each other as comrades, and to give assistance in every way. If, for example, Sininyane had happened to travel into the country where Moshoshama lived, the latter was bound to receive him into his house, and treat him like a brother.

They seem to be an intelligent race, and to appreciate the notion of a Creator, and of the immortality of the soul; but, like most African races, they cannot believe that the white and the black races have anything in common, or that the religion of the former can suit the latter. They are very ready to admit that Christianity is an admirable religion for white men, but will by no means be persuaded that it would be equally good for themselves.

They have a hazy sort of idea of *their* Creator, the invisible head-chief of the spirits, and ground their belief on the immortality of the soul on the fact that their departed relatives come and speak to them in their dreams. They have the same idea of the muave poison that has already been mentioned; and so strong is their belief in its efficacy that, in a dispute, one man will challenge the other to drink muave; and even the chiefs themselves will often offer to test its discriminating powers.

When a Manganja dies, a great wailing is kept up in his house for two days ; his tools and weapons are broken, together with the cooking vessels. All food in the house is taken out and destroyed ; and even the beer is poured on the earth.

The burial grounds seem to be carefully cherished—as carefully, indeed, as many of our churchyards in England. The graves are all arranged north and south, and the sexes of the dead are marked by the implement laid on the grave. These implements are always broken ; partly, perhaps, to signify that they can be used no more, and partly to save them from being stolen. Thus a broken mortar and pestle for pounding corn, together with the fragments of a sieve, tell that there lies below a woman who once had used them ; whilst a piece of a net and a shattered paddle are emblems of the fisherman's trade, and tell that a fisherman is interred below. Broken calabashes, gourds, and other vessels, are laid on almost every grave ; and in some instances a banana is planted at the head.

The relatives wear a kind of mourning, consisting of narrow strips of palm-leaf wound round their heads, necks, arms, legs, and breasts, and allowed to remain there until they drop off by decay.



AFRICAN RATTLE.—(From my collection.)

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE BANYAI AND BADEMA TRIBES.

GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE BANYAI TRIBE—GOVERNMENT AND LAW OF SUCCESSION—DISCIPLINE OF YOUTH—MARRIAGE CUSTOMS—HUNTING—THE HIPPOPOTAMUS-TRAP—A MANOROVE SWAMP—RAPACITY OF THE BANYAI CHIEF—BANYAI AXES, AND MODE OF MAKING THEM—ELEPHANT HUNTING—BOLDNESS OF THE MEN—SUPERSTITIONS OF THE BANYAI—IDEA ABOUT THE HYÆNA—THE “TABOO”—CURIOUS BEEHIVES—THE BADEMA TRIBE—FISHING AND HUNTING WITH NETS—CONCEALMENT OF PROPERTY.

ON the south bank of the Zambesi, somewhere about lat. 16° S. and long. 30° E., there is a tribe called the Banyai, who inhabit a tract of country called Shidima. The Banyai are a remarkably fine race of men, being tall, well made, and agile, and are moreover very fair, being of that *café au lait* colour which is so fashionable in many parts of Africa. As some of their customs are unlike those of other tribes, a short mention will be made of them.

Their appearance is rather pleasing, and they have a curious fashion of dressing their hair, which much resembles that which was in use among the ancient Egyptians. The fashionable Banyai youth first divides his hair into small tufts, and draws them out as far as he can, encircling each tuft with a spiral bandage of vegetable tissue. The various tufts are then dyed red, and as they are sometimes a foot in length, and hang upon the shoulders, they present a very remarkable aspect. When the Banyai travel, they are fearful of damaging their elaborate head-dress, and so they gather it up in a bundle, and tie it on the top of the head.

Their government is equally simple and sensible. They choose their own chief, although they always keep to the same family. When a chief dies, his people consult together as to his successor. His immediate descendants are never selected, and, if possible, one of his brothers, or a nephew, is chosen. If they cannot find a qualified person at home, they go further afield, and look out for those relatives who have mingled with other tribes, thus bringing a new population into their own tribe. Traders from other tribes are always very cautious about visiting the Banyai during the interregnum, as the people think that while there is no chief there is no law, and will in consequence rob without compunction those whom they would never venture to touch as long as the chief was living.

When the future chief is chosen, the electors go to him and tell him of their choice. It is then thought manners for him to assume a *nolo episcopari* air, to modestly deprecate his own character, and to remonstrate with the deputation for having elected a person so unworthy to fill the place of his revered predecessor, who possessed all the virtues and none of the weaknesses of humanity. In fact, the speech of the Banyai king-elect would answer excellently for newly-elected dignitaries of our own country, who make exactly the same kind of oration and would be equally offended were they to be taken at their word.

Of course the new chief, after his deprecatory speech, assumes the vacant office, together with all the property, including the wives and children, of his predecessor, and takes very good care to keep the latter in subservience. Sometimes one of the sons thinks that he ought to be a man, and set up for a kind of chief himself, and accordingly secedes from the paternal roof, gathers round him as many youths as he can persuade to accompany him, and becomes a petty chief accordingly. The principal chief, however, has no idea of allowing an *imperium in imperio* in his dominions, and when the young chieftain has built his village and fairly settled down, he sends a body of his own soldiery to offer his congratulations. If the young chieftain receives them with clapping of hands and humble obeisance, all is well, as the supreme authority of the chief is thereby acknowledged. If not, they burn down all the village, and so teach by very intelligible language that before a youth dares to be a chieftain he had better perform the duties which a vassal owes to his sovereign.

There is a system among the Banyai which has a singular resemblance to the instruction of pages in the days of chivalry. When a man attains to emiuece, he gathers around him a band of young boys, who are placed by their parents under his charge, and who are taught to become accomplished gentlemen after Banyai ideas. While they are yet in the condition of pagehood, they are kept under strict discipline, and obliged to be humble and punctilious towards their superiors, whom they recognise with the hand-clapping which is the salute common throughout Central Africa. At meal times they are not allowed to help themselves, but are obliged to wait patiently until the food is divided for them by one of the men. They are also instructed in the Banyai law; and when they return to their parents, a case is submitted to them, and the progress which they have made is ascertained by their answers. To their teachers they are exceedingly useful. They are all sons of free men who are tolerably well off, and who send servants to accompany their sons, and to till the ground for their maintenance. They also send ivory to the teacher, with which he purchases clothing for the young scholars.

This custom shows that a certain amount of culture has been attained by the Banyai, and the social condition of their women is a still stronger proof. In most parts of savage Africa the woman is little more than a beast of burden, and has no more to do with the management of affairs or with her husband's counsels than the cows for which he has bought her. In Banyai land, however, the women have not only their full share of power, but rather more than their share, the husbands never venturing to undertake any business or to conduct any bargain without the consent of their wives. The women even act as traders, visiting other towns with merchandise, and acting fairly towards both the purchaser and themselves.

Their marriages are conducted in a manner which shows that the wife is quite the equal of her husband. In most parts of Southern Africa a wife is bought for a stipulated number of cows, and as soon as the bargain is concluded, and the girl handed over to the purchaser, she becomes his property, and is treated as such. But, among the Banyai, the young bridegroom does not take his wife to his hut; he goes to the house of her parents. Here he is quite the inferior, and is the special servant of his mother-in-law, cutting wood for her use, and being very respectful in demeanour. Should he not like this kind of life, and be desirous of leaving it, he may do so whenever he likes; but he has to relinquish wife and children, unless he can pay the parents of the wife a sufficient sum to compensate them for their loss. Nevertheless, this is the principle on which the custom of buying wives is founded: but there are few places where the theory is reduced to practice.

Among the Banyai, as among many of the tribes along the river, the flesh of the hippopotamus is much eaten, and the capture of the animal is consequently a matter of importance. They do not care for boldly chasing the hippopotamus, as do the tribes which have already been mentioned, but they prefer to resort to the pit-fall and the drop-trap. The pit-falls are always dug in places where the animal is likely to tread; and the pits are not only numerous, but generally placed in pairs close to each other. On one occasion a white traveller happened to fall into one of these pits, and after he had recovered from the shock of finding himself suddenly deprived of the light of day and

enclosed in a deep hole, he set to work, and after many hours' labour managed to free himself from his unpleasant position. But no sooner had he fairly got out of the pit than he unfortunately stepped upon its companion, and fell into it just as he had fallen into the other.

The most ingenious mode of capturing the animal is by means of the drop-trap.

For this purpose the native cuts a rather long and heavy log of wood, and, in order to make it still heavier, a couple of large stones are tied to it near one end, or a quantity of clay is kneaded round it. At the loaded end a hole is made, into which is set a spear-head, sometimes that of a large assagai, but mostly a sort of harpoon like that which has been described on page 379. A rope loop is then fastened to the other end, and the weapon is ready.

The hunter now goes to a hippopotamus track, and looks out for a branch that overhangs it. Generally he can find a branch that will suit his purpose; but if not, he rigs up a sort of gallows on which he can suspend the armed log. When he has found a convenient branch, he takes a long rope, one end of which is fastened to a stick, places the stick across the branch, and hangs the loop of the harpoon upon the other end. He next passes the cord round a peg at the foot of the tree, about eighteen inches or so from the ground, draws it across the path, and then makes it fast.

The accompanying illustration will explain how the whole business is managed. The tree on which the weapon is suspended is the mangrove, a tree utterly unlike any of those which we have in this land. The extraordinary vitality of this tree is well shown by the sketch, which was made by Mr. Baines. The trunk has been broken off, but the upper part has fallen against another tree and been supported by it. It has then thrown out a number of roots, which have descended to the moist ground, and give the tree a new support of its own. In such a case, the branches that tend downwards wither away and die, those that tend upwards increase rapidly, while those that project sideways take a turn, and then curve themselves upwards. Examples of these branches may be seen in the sketch.

The mangrove is a self-sowing tree, and performs this act in a very curious manner. The seeds are very long, and furnished at the end with a hard, pointed tip. As soon as it is ripe, the seed falls, burying the pointed tip several inches into the soft swampy soil, which mangroves love, and there remains. The object of this curious provision of



HIPPOPOTAMUS TRAP.

Nature is, that the seed shall not be washed away by the periodical floods which inundate the country.

In such a soil there is no difficulty in finding the path of the hippopotamus, for the heavy and clumsy animal leaves a track which could be followed in the darkest night. Owing to the great width of its body, the feet of the opposite sides are set rather wider apart than is the case with lighter animals, so that when the hippopotamus walks through grass it makes a distinct double path, with a ridge of grass in the middle. When it walks on the soft muddy soil of the river bank, the animal makes a most curious track, the feet sinking deeply into the earth, and forming a sort of double rut studded with holes at the distance of an inch or two from each other, a ridge some two inches in width dividing the ruts.

There is no path so trying to a traveller as a hippopotamus track. In that part of the country it is necessary to walk barefoot, or, at all events, to use nothing more than the native sandals. If the traveller tries to walk on the central ridge, he finds that the exertion of keeping the balance is almost equivalent to walking on a tight-rope or a Bornean "batang," and that the pressure on the middle of the foot soon becomes too painful to be borne. If he tries to walk in the ruts, he is no better off, for his feet sink deeply into the holes punched by the limbs of the hippopotamus, the toes are forcibly pressed upwards, and the leg is fixed so tightly in the hole that the traveller cannot withdraw it until the earth has been removed.

Over one of these tracks the native hunter suspends his harpoon, taking care that the blade hangs exactly above the central ridge. As the hippopotamus comes walking along he strikes his foot against the cord. The blow releases the harpoon, which falls with tremendous violence, burying the iron head deep in the animal's back. Now and then the head comes exactly on the spine, and in that case the animal falls helpless on the spot. Usually, however, the wound is not immediately fatal, and the hippopotamus rushes to the river, hoping thus to shake off the cruel weapon which had tortured him on land. Sooner or later, he is sure to die from the wound, and then the natives, who, like the hippopotamus, never hurry themselves, drag the huge carcase to land, and hold a mighty feast upon it.

In some parts of the country these fall-traps are set nearly as thickly as the pits which have already been mentioned, and the result is, that the animals have become exceedingly suspicious, and will not approach anything that looks like a trap. They are so thoroughly afraid of being injured, that the native agriculturists are in the habit of imitating traps by suspending mangrove seeds, bits of sticks, and other objects, to the branches of trees, knowing that the wary animal will keep very clear of so dangerous-looking a locality. The trap has to be set with considerable skill, and much care must be taken to conceal the rope which crosses the path, or the animal will not strike it. Large and heavy, and apparently clumsy, as he is, he can look out for himself, and, in places where traps are plentiful, he becomes so suspicious that if even a twig lies across his path he will rather go round it than tread it under foot.

The Banyai chiefs do not neglect the usual African custom of demanding toll from every traveller who passes through their territories, although they do not appear to be quite so rapacious as some, of whom we shall presently treat. The Banyai enforce their tribute much as the owner of a ferry compels payment for the passengers. Knowing that their permission, and even assistance, is needed in passing through the country, they set a very high price upon their services, and will not allow the traveller to proceed until he has complied with their demands. Feeling sure of their position, they are apt to be violent as well as extortionate, flinging down the offered sum with contemptuous gestures, and abusing their victims with a wonderful flow of disparaging language.

Dr. Livingstone, knowing their customs, contrived to get the better of the Banyai in a place where they were accustomed to carry things with a high hand, even over the Portuguese traders. At night, when the time came for repose, instead of going ashore, after the usual custom of the native canoe men, he anchored in the middle of the stream, and had couches made on board. This device completely disconcerted the plans of the Banyai, who expected the travellers to come ashore, and, of course, would have kept them prisoners until they had paid a heavy toll for permission to embark again. They even shouted

invitations from the river bank to come and sleep on land, but dared not attack a boat filled with armed men commanded by Europeans.

The oddest part of the whole proceeding was, that the Makololo and Batoka boatmen, who were accompanying Dr. Livingstone, had never thought of so simple a device, and roared exultant jeers from their boat to the Banyai on shore.

The country in which the Banyai live furnishes various kinds of food of which a European would be ignorant, and therefore would run a great risk of starving in a place where the Banyai would be revelling in plenty. Ant-hills, for example, almost always furnish huge mushrooms, which are at once palatable and nutritious; and there are several kinds of subterranean tubers that are only to be found by striking the ground with stones and listening to the sound. One of these tubers is remarkable for the fact that in winter time it has a slight but perceptible quantity of salt in it.

The Banyai, like other African tribes, have their peculiar superstitions, such as pouring out the contents of their snuff-box as an offering to the spirits of the dead when they are engaged in hunting, hoping thereby to propitiate them and procure their aid. One man who had performed this act of devotion was quite scandalized at the irreverence of hunters who belonged to other tribes, and who, as he said, did not know how to pray. The same man took to himself the credit of having destroyed an elephant which had been killed by others, his prayers and snuff, and not the weapons of the hunters, having, according to his idea, been the real instruments by which the animal fell.

The particular animal, by the way, was killed in a manner peculiar to some of the tribes in this part of Africa. These native hunters are very Nimrods for skill and courage, going after the elephant into the depths of his own forest, and boldly coping with him, though armed with weapons which a European would despise.

The chief weapon which is used by these tribes is a kind of axe. It is made much after the fashion of those which are figured on page 321, and bears some resemblance in the shape of the head to that which is shown in fig. 2. The "tang," however, which is fastened into the handle, is at least three feet in length, and the handle is sometimes six or seven feet long, so that the instrument looks more like a scythe than an axe. The handle is made by cutting off a branch of convenient thickness, and also a foot or two of the trunk at its junction. A hole is then bored through the piece of the trunk, the tang of the head inserted into it, and the rough wood then dressed into shape; thus the necessary weight is gained without the expenditure of valuable metal.

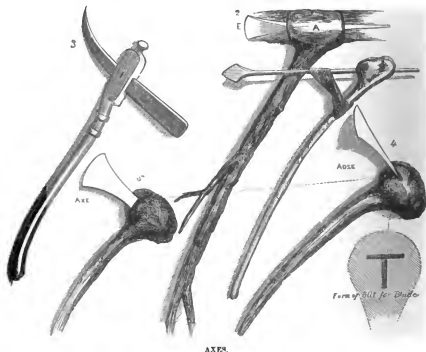
The illustration on page 404 will make this ingenious process clear. Fig. 2 represents part of the trunk of a tree, marked A, from which starts a convenient branch. Seeing that this branch will answer for the handle of an axe, the native cuts across the trunk, and thus has a very rude kind of mallet, possessed of considerable weight. A hole is next bored through the part of the trunk, and the iron tang of the axe-head thrust through it. The superabundant wood is then trimmed off, as shown in the cut, the branch is scraped and smoothed, and the simple but effective axe is complete.

Figs 4 and 5 represent a convertible axe which is much used by this people. As in their work they sometimes need an adze, and sometimes an axe, they have ingeniously made a tool which will serve either purpose. The handle and butt are made exactly as



CARRYING THE AXE.

has already been described, but, instead of piercing a single hole for the iron head, the Banyai cut two holes at right angles to each other, as seen in the diagram below, fig. 4. The iron, therefore, can be fixed in either of these sockets, and, according to the mode in which it is inserted, the tool becomes either an axe or an adze. At fig. 4 it is placed in the horizontal socket, and accordingly the tool is an adze; but at fig. 5 it is transformed into an axe, merely by shifting the iron head into the perpendicular socket.



It is a curious fact that the Water Dyaks of Borneo have a very similar tool, which they use in boat-building. It is much smaller than the Banyai axe, being only used in one hand, and the head is fixed to the handle by an elaborate binding of split rattan, which is so contrived that the head can be turned at pleasure with its edge parallel to or across the handle.

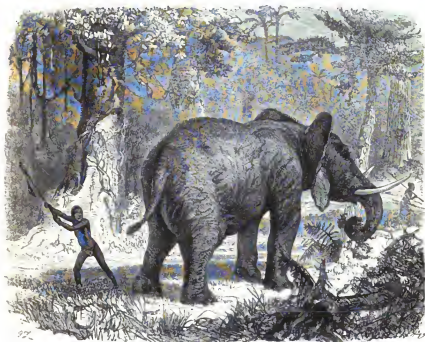
Fig. 3 represents a rather curious form of axe, which is sometimes found among the Banyai and other tribes. The head is very long, and it is made so, that when the owner wishes to carry it from one place to another, he does not trouble himself to hold it in his hand, but merely hangs it over his shoulder, as seen in the illustration on page 403. The reader is requested to note the mode in which the head is dressed, the hair being shaven in stripes, and the lower locks twisted into long, ringlet-like strands.

The elephant axe is shown at fig. 1, but it is hardly long enough in the handle. In one part of Central Africa the head is fastened to the handle by means of a socket; but this form is exceedingly rare, and in such a climate as is afforded by tropical Africa is far inferior to that which has been described.

The hunters who use this curious weapon go in pairs, one having the axe, which has been most carefully sharpened, and the other not troubling himself about any weapon.

except perhaps a spear or two. When they have found an elephant with good tusks, they separate, and work their way round a wide circuit, so as to come upon him from different quarters, the axeman always approaching from behind, and the assistant coming towards the front.

As soon as they know, by well-understood signals, that they are near the animal, they begin their work. The assistant begins to rustle among the branches at some distance in front, not in such a manner as to alarm the elephant, but to keep his attention fixed, and



HAMSTRINGING AN ELEPHANT.

make him wonder what the singular movements can mean. While he is engaged with the man in front, the axeman steals gradually on him from behind, and with a sweep of his huge weapon severs the tendon of the hock, which in the elephant is at a very short distance from the ground. From that moment the animal is helpless, its enormous weight requiring the full use of all its limbs; and the hunters can, if they choose, leave it there and go after another, being quite sure that they will find the lamed animal in the same place where it was left. Even if the axe-blow should not quite sever the tendon, it is sure to cut so deeply that at the first step which the animal takes the tendon gives way with a loud snap.

The illustration is from a sketch by Mr. Baines, and represents the axeman in the act of striking. The elephant is standing in the shade of the "bush," with his attention fixed on the hunter in the distance, who is moving about among the foliage. The scene is truly characteristic of a forest in tropical Central Africa. Just behind the axeman is a fine palm which has been killed by a fig-tree, an event which is of common occurrence in tropical countries. A quantity of the monkey-rope creepers have flung their many

coils over the branches, and are often serviceable to the hunter, enabling him to ascend a tree if detected and chased by the elephant. A dwarf-palm is in front of the elephant, and partly conceals his fore-legs.

To return to the religious notions of the Banyai.

The man who made oblation of his snuff said that the elephant was specially directed by the Great Spirit to come to the hunters, because they were hungry and wanted food; a plain proof that they have some idea, however confused and imperfect it may be, of a superintending and guiding Providence. The other Banyai showed by their conduct that this feeling was common to the tribe, and not peculiar to the individual; for when they brought corn, poultry, and beads, as thankofferings to the hunters who had killed the elephant, they mentioned that they had already given thanks to the Barimo, or gods, for the successful chase. The Banyai seem to have odd ideas about animals; for when the hyænas set up their hideous laugh, the men said that they were laughing because they knew that the men could not eat all the elephant, and must leave some for the hyænas.

In some parts of the country the hyænas and lions are so numerous, that when the inhabitants are benighted at a distance from human habitations, they build little resting-places in the branches of trees, and lodge there for the night, leaving their little huts in the branches as memorials of their visit.

Among the peculiar superstitions is one which is much in vogue. This is a mode of protecting property from thieves, and consists of a strip of palm-leaf, smeared with some compound, and decorated with tufts of grass, bits of wood, little roots, and the like. It is chiefly used for the protection of honey, which is sometimes wild, the bees making a nest for themselves in the hollow of a tree, and sometimes preserved in hives, which are made of bark, and placed in the branches. The hives are long and cylindrical, and laid on their sides. The protecting palm-leaf is tied round the tree, and the natives firmly believe that if a thief were to climb over it, much more to remove it, he would be at once afflicted with illness, and soon die. The reader will see here an analogous superstition to the "tāpu," or taboo, of Polynesia.

The hives are made simply enough. Two incisions are made completely round the tree, about five feet apart, and a longitudinal slit is then cut from one incision to the other. The bark is carefully opened at this slit, and by proper management it comes off the tree without being broken, returning by its own elasticity to its original shape. The edges of the slit are then sewn together, or fastened by a series of little wooden pegs. The ends are next closed with grass-ropes, coiled up just like the targets which are used by modern archers; and, a hole being made in one of the ends, the hive is complete. Large quantities of honey and wax are thus collected and used for exportation; indeed all the wax that comes from Loanda is collected from these hives.

THE BADÉMA TRIBE.

THERE is still left a small fragment of one of the many African tribes ^{which are} rapidly expiring. These people are called BADÉMA, and from their ingenuity ^{ing seem to} deserve a better fate. They are careful husbandmen, and cultivate small quant. ^{ties of} tobacco, maize, and cotton in the hollows of the valleys, where sufficient moisture ^{is, hyænas} to support vegetation. They are clever sportsmen, and make great use of the net, as ^{well} on the land as in the water. For fishing they have a kind of casting net, and when ^{this} go out to catch zebras, antelopes, and other animals, they do so by stretching nets across ^s the narrow outlets of ravines, and then driving the game into them. The nets are made ^e of baobab bark, and are very strong.

They have a singularly ingenious mode of preserving their corn. Like many other failing tribes, they are much persecuted by their stronger neighbours, who are apt to make raids upon them, and carry off all their property, the chief part of which consists of corn. Consequently they are obliged to conceal their stores in the hills, and only keep a small portion in their huts, just sufficient for the day's consumption. But the mice and monkeys are quite as fond of corn as their human enemies, and would soon destroy all their stores, had not the men a plan by which they could be preserved. The Radéma have found out a tree, the bark of which is hateful both to the mice and the monkeys. Accordingly they strip off the bark, which is of a very bitter character, roll it up into cylindrical vessels, and in these vessels they keep their corn safely in caves and crevices among the rocks.

Of course, when their enemies come upon them, they always deny that they have any food except that which is in their huts, and when Dr. Livingstone came among them for the first time they made the stereotyped denial, stating that they had been robbed only a few weeks before.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE BALONDO OR BALONDA AND THE ANGOLESE.

GENERAL APPEARANCE—MODE OF GOVERNMENT—WOMAN'S DRESS—MANENKO AND HER STRANGE COSTUME—FASHIONS IN HAIR-DRESSING—COSTUME OF THE MEN—THEIR ORNAMENTS—PECULIAR GAIT—MODE OF SALUTATION—CURIOSITY—MILDNESS OF TEMPERAMENT—AN ATTEMPT AT EXTORTION—A SCENE AT COURT—BALONDA MUSIC—MANENKO IN COMMAND—KATEMA AND HIS BEARER—LOVE OF CATTLE—FOOD OF THE BALONDA—FISH-CATCHING—BALONDA ARCHITECTURE—CEMENTING FRIENDSHIP—RELIGION AND IDOLS—A WILD LEGEND—FUNERAL CUSTOMS—THE ANGOLESE—THEIR CHARACTER—AGRICULTURE—THE MANIOC, AND ITS USES—MEDICINES AND CUPPING—SUPERSTITIONS—MARRIAGES AND FUNERALS—DR. LIVINGSTONE'S SUMMARY.

WE now come to a rather important tribe that lives very close to the equator. This is called the Balondo or Balonda tribe, *i.e.* the people who inhabit Londa-land, a very large district on the western side of Africa. A great number of small tribes inhabit this country, but, as they really are offshoots of the one tribe, we will treat of them all under the common name of Balondo.

The chief ruler, or king, of the Balonda tribes is Matiamvo, a name which is hereditary, like that of Czar or Pharaoh. He has absolute power of life and death, and one of them had a way of proving this authority by occasionally running about the town and beheading every one whom he met, until sometimes quite a heap of human heads was collected. He said that his people were too numerous to be prosperous, and so he took this simple method of diminishing their numbers. There seems to be no doubt that he was insane, and his people thought so too; but their reverence for his office was so great that he was allowed to pursue his mad course without check, and at length died peaceably, instead of being murdered, as might have been expected.

He was a great slave-dealer, and used to conduct the transaction in a manner remarkable for its simplicity. When a slave-merchant came to his town, he took all his visitor's property, and kept him as a guest for a week or ten days. After that time, having shown his hospitality, he sent out a party of armed men against some populous village, killed the head-man, and gave the rest of the inhabitants to the slave-merchant in payment for his goods. Thus he enriched his treasury and thinned his population by the same act.

Indeed, he seemed always to look upon villages as property which could be realized at any time, and had, besides, the advantage of steadily increasing in value. If he heard of or saw anything which he desired exceedingly, and the owner declined to part with it, he would destroy a whole village and offer the plunder to the owner of the coveted property.

Still, under this régime, the people lead, as a general rule, tolerably happy and contented lives. They are not subjected to the same despotism as the tribes of the southern districts, and, indeed, often refuse to obey the orders of the chief. Once, when Katema sent to the Balobale, a sub-tribe under his protection, and ordered them to furnish men to carry Dr. Livingstone's goods, they flatly refused to do so, in spite of Katema's threat that, if they did not obey, he would deprive them of his countenance, and send them back to

their former oppressors. The fact is, each of the chiefs is anxious to collect round himself as many people as possible, in order to swell his own importance, and he does not like to do anything that might drive them away from him into the ranks of some rival chief. Dr. Livingstone remarks that this disobedience is the more remarkable, as it occurs in a country where the slave-trade is in full force, and where people may be kidnapped and sold under any pretext that may happen to occur to the chief.

As is frequently the case with African tribes, there is considerable variety of colour among the Balondo, some being of a notably pale chocolate hue, while others are so black as to rival the negro in darkness of complexion. They appear to be a rather pleasing set of men, tainted, as must be the case, with the ordinary vices of savage life, but not morose, cruel, or treacherous, as is too often the case. The women appear to be almost exceptionally lively, being full of animal spirits, and spending all their leisure time, which seems to be considerable, in chattering, weddings, funerals, and similar amusements. Dr. Livingstone offers a suggestion that this flow of spirits may be one reason why they are so indestructible a race, and thinks that their total want of care is caused by the fatalism of their religious theories, such as they are. Indeed, he draws rather a curious conclusion from their happy and cheerful mode of life, considering that it would be a difficulty in the way of a missionary, though why a lively disposition and Christianity should be opposed to each other is not easy to see.

One woman, named Manenko, afforded a curious example of mixed energy, liveliness, and authority. She was a chief, and, though married, retained the command in her own hands. When she first visited Dr. Livingstone, she was a remarkably tall and fine woman of twenty or thereabouts, and rather astonished her guest by appearing before him in a bright coat of red ochre, and nothing else, except some charms hung round her neck. This absence of clothing was entirely a voluntary act on her part, as, being a chief, she might have had any amount of clothing that she liked; but she evidently thought that her dignity required her to outdo the generality of Balondo ladies in the scantiness of apparel which distinguishes them.

In one part of Londa-land the women are almost wholly without clothes, caring nothing for garments, except those of European manufacture, which they wear with much pride. Even in this latter case the raiment is not worn so much as a covering to the body as a kind of ornament which shows the wealth of the wearer, as the women will purchase calico and other stuffs at extravagant prices. They were willing to give twenty pounds weight of meal and a fowl for a little strip of calico barely two feet in length, and, having put it on, were quite charmed with their new dress.

The fact is, they have never been accustomed to dress, and "are all face," the weather having no more effect on their bodies than it does on our faces. Even the very babies are deprived of the warm fur-clad wrapper in which the generality of African mothers carry them, and the infant is as exposed to the weather as its mother. The Londa mother carries her child in a very simple manner. She plait a bark-belt, some four inches or so in width, and hangs it over one shoulder and under the other, like the sash of a light infantry officer. The child is partly seated on its mother's hip, and partly supported by the belt, which, as is evident, does not afford the least protection against the weather.

They even sleep in the same state of nudity, keeping up a fire at night, which they say is their clothing. The women tried very hard to move the compassionate feelings of their white visitors by holding up their little naked babies, and begging for clothes; but it was clear that the real destination of such clothes was for ornaments for themselves.

As is the case with several other tribes which care little for clothes, they decorate their heads with the greatest care, weaving their hair into a variety of patterns, that must cost infinite trouble to make, and scarcely less to preserve. They often employ the "buffalo-horn" pattern, which has already been mentioned, sometimes working their hair into two horns, and sometimes into one, which projects over the forehead. Some of them divide the hair into a number of cords or plaits, and allow them to hang all round the face. The most singular method of dressing the hair is one which is positively startling at first sight, on account of the curious resemblance which it bears to the "nimbus" with which the heads of saints are conventionally surrounded. The hair is dressed in plaits, as

has already been mentioned, but, instead of being allowed to hang down, each plait or strand is drawn out in a radiating fashion, and the ends are fastened to a hoop of light wood. When this is done, the hoop itself represents the nimbus, and the strands of hair the radiating beams of light.



WOMEN'S HEAD-DRESS

The features of the Balondo women are pleasing enough, and in some cases are even tolerably regular. The teeth are allowed to retain their original form and whiteness; and it is a pity that so many good countenances are disfigured by the custom of thrusting pieces of reed through the septum of the nose.

The dress of the Balonda men is more worthy of the name than that of the women, as it consists of a girdle round the waist, with a softly-dressed skin of a jackal in front, and a similar skin behind. Dr. Livingstone relates an anecdote concerning this dress, which shows how arbitrary is the feeling of decency and its opposite. He had with him

a number of Makololo men, whose dress is similar to that of many other tribes, and consists merely of a piece of soft hide fastened to the girdle in front, brought under the legs, and tucked into the girdle behind.

Now this dress is much more worthy of the name than the double skin of the Balonda. Yet the Balondo girls, themselves in a state of almost complete nudity, were very much shocked when they found that the Makololo men wore no back-apron. Whenever a Makololo man happened to turn his back upon the women and girls, they laughed and jeered at him to such an extent that he was made quite wretched by their scorn. Had they been even moderately clad, such behaviour might seem excusable, but when it is remembered that the dress of the despised visitor would have furnished costumes to four or five of the women who were laughing at him, we can but wonder at the singular hold which fashion takes of the human mind.

The Balondo men are as fond of ornaments as their wives, and, as with them, the decorations chiefly belong to the head and the feet. In some places they have a fashion of dressing their hair into a conical form, similar to that which has been already mentioned; while a man who is fond of dress will generally show his foppery by twisting his beard into three distinct plaits. Some of the Balondo men have a considerable quantity of thick woolly hair, and dress it in a singular fashion. They begin by parting it down the middle, and then forming the hair of each side into two thick rolls, which pass between the ears and fall down as far as the shoulders. The rest of the hair is gathered up into a bundle, and hangs on the back of the neck.

Whenever they can afford it, the Balondo men will carry one of the large knives which are so prevalent in this part of the continent. Throughout the whole of Western Africa there is one type of knife, which undergoes various modifications according to the particular district in which it is made, and this type is as characteristic of Western Africa as the Bechuana knife is of the southern parts. The illustration shows two of these knives; they exhibit well their curious form, which is almost identical with that of weapons taken from tumuli in Europe. The sheath is always very wide, and is made with great care, being mostly ornamental as well as useful. The figures were drawn from specimens in Colonel Lane Fox's collection.

Heavy rings of copper and other metals are as much in vogue as among the Damaras; only the men prefer to wear them on their own limbs, instead of banding them over to their wives. As wealth is mostly carried on the person in this country, a rich Balondo man will have six or seven great copper rings encircling his ankles, each ring weighing two pounds or so. The gait of a rich man is therefore singularly ungraceful, the feet being planted widely apart, so that the massive rings should not come in contact. The peculiar gait which is caused by the presence of the treasured rings is much admired among the Balondo, and is studiously imitated by those who have no need to use it. A young man, for example, who is only worth half a dozen rings weighing half an ounce or so each, will strut about with his feet wide apart, as if he could hardly walk for the weight of his anklets.

The ornament which is most prized is made from a large species of shell belonging to the genus *Conus*. The greater part of the shell is chipped away, and only the flat and spiral base is left. This is pierced in the middle, and a string is passed through the middle, so that it can be hung round the neck. Dr. Livingstone tells an anecdote which shows the estimation in which this ornament is held. Just before his departure the king,



DAGGERS.

Shinte, came into his tent, and passed a considerable time in examining his books, watch, and other curiosities. At last he carefully closed the door of the tent, so that none of his people might see the extravagance of which he was about to be guilty, and drew one of these shells from his clothing, hung it round his host's neck, with the words, "There, now you have a proof of my friendship." These shells are used, like stars and crosses among ourselves, as emblems of rank; and they have besides a heavy intrinsic value, costing the king at the rate of a slave for two, or a large elephant's tusk for five.

The very fact that they possess insignia of rank shows that they must possess some degree of civilization; and this is also shown by the manner in which inferiors are bound to salute those above them. If a man of low rank should meet a superior, the former immediately drops on his knees, picks up a little dirt, rubs it on his arms and chest, and then claps his hands until the great man has passed. So punctilious are they in their manner, that when Samhanza, the husband of Manenko, was making a speech to the people of a village, he interspersed his discourse with frequent salutations, although he was a man of consequence himself, being the husband of the chief.

There are many gradations in the mode of saluting. Great chiefs go through the movements of rubbing the sand, but they only make a pretence of picking up sand. If a man desires to be very polite indeed, he carries with him some white ashes or powdered pipe-clay in a piece of skin, and, after kneeling in the usual manner, rubs it on his chest and arms, the white powder being an ocular proof that the salutation has been properly conducted. He then claps his hands, stoops forward, lays first one cheek and then the other on the ground, and continues his clapping for some little time. Sometimes, instead of clapping his hands, he drums with his elbows against his ribs.

On the whole, those travellers who have passed through Londa seem to be pleased with the character of the inhabitants. Dr. Livingstone appears to have had but little trouble with them, except when resisting the extortionate demands which they, like other tribes, were apt to make for leave of passage through their country.

"One could detect, in passing, the variety of character found among the owners of gardens and villages. Some villages were the pictures of neatness. We entered others enveloped in a wilderness of weeds, so high that, when sitting on an ox-back in the middle of the village, we could only see the tops of the huts. If we entered at mid-day, the owners would come lazily forth, pipe in hand, and leisurely puff away in dreamy indifference. In some villages weeds were not allowed to grow; cotton, tobacco, and different plants used as relishes, are planted round the huts; fowls are kept in cages; and the gardens present the pleasant spectacle of different kinds of grain and pulse at various periods of their growth. I sometimes admired the one class, and at times wished I could have taken the world easy, like the other.

"Every village swarms with children, who turn out to see the white man pass, and run along with strange cries and antics; some run up trees to get a good view—all are agile climbers through Londa. At friendly villages they have scampered alongside our party for miles at a time. We usually made a little hedge round our sheds; crowds of women came to the entrance of it, with children on their backs, and pipes in their mouths, gazing at us for hours. The men, rather than disturb them, crawled through a hole in the hedge; and it was common to hear a man in running off say to them, "I am going to tell my mamma to come and see the white man's oxen."

According to the same authority, the Balonda do not appear to be a very quarrelsome race, generally restricting themselves to the tongue as a weapon, and seldom resorting to anything more actively offensive. The only occasion on which he saw a real quarrel take place was rather a curious one. An old woman had been steadily abusing a young man for an hour or two, with that singular fluency of invective with which those women seem to be gifted. He endured it patiently for some time, but at last uttered an exclamation of anger. On which another man sprang forward, and angrily demanded why the other had cursed his mother. They immediately closed with each other, and a scuffle commenced, in the course of which they contrived to tear off the whole of each other's clothing. The man who began the assault then picked up his clothes and ran away,

threatening to bring his gun, but he did not return, and the old woman proceeded with her abuse of the remaining combatant.

In their quarrels the Balonda make plenty of noise, but after a while they suddenly cease from their mutual invective, and conclude the dispute with a hearty laugh.

Once a most flagrant attempt at extortion was made by Kawawa, a Balonda chief who had a very bad character, and was in disfavour with Matiamvo, the supreme chief of the Balonda. He sent a body of men to a ferry which they had to cross, in order to prevent the boatmen taking them over the river. The canoes were removed; and as the river was at least a hundred yards wide, and very deep, Kawawa thought he had the stranger at his mercy, and that if the cart, the ox, the gun, the powder, and the slave, which he required, were not forthcoming, he could keep the strangers until they were forced to comply with his demands. However, during the night Dr. Livingstone swam to the place where the canoes were hidden, ferried the whole party across, replaced the canoe, together with some beads as payment for its use, and quietly swam to the side on which their party were now safely landed. Kawawa had no idea that any of the travellers could swim, and the whole party were greatly amused at the astonishment which they knew he must feel when he found the travellers vanished and the canoes still in their place of concealment.

Some of the Balonda have a very clever but rather mean method of extorting money from travellers. When they ferry a party over the river, they purposely drop or leave in a canoe a knife or some other object of value. They then watch to see if any one will pick it up, and if so, seize their victim and accuse him of the theft. They always manage to do so just before the head man of the party has been ferried across, and threaten to retain him as a hostage until their demand be paid. Dr. Livingstone once fell a victim to this trick, a lad belonging to his party having picked up a knife which was thrown down as a bait by one of the rascally boatmen. As the lad happened to possess one of those precious shells which have been mentioned, he was forced to surrender it to secure his liberty.

Such conduct was, however, unusual with the Balonda, and the two great chiefs, Shinte and Katema, behaved with the greatest kindness to the travellers. The former chief gave them a grand reception, which exhibited many of the manners and customs of the people.

The royal throne was placed under the shade of a spreading banian tree, and was covered with a leopard-skin. The chief had disfigured himself with a checked jacket and a green baize kilt; but, besides these portions of civilized costume, he wore a multitude of native ornaments, the most conspicuous being the number of copper and iron rings round his arms and ankles, and a sort of bead helmet adorned with a large plume of feathers. His three pages were close to him, and behind him sat a number of women headed by his chief wife, who was distinguished from the others by a cap of scarlet material.

In many other parts of Africa the women would have been rigidly excluded from a public ceremony, and at the best might have been permitted to see it from a distance; but among the Balonda the women take their own part in such meetings; and on the present occasion Shinte often turned and spoke to them, as if asking their opinion.

Maueuko's husband, Sambanza, introduced the party, and did so in the usual manner, by saluting with ashes. After him the various subdivisions of the tribe came forward in their order, headed by its chief man, who carried ashes with him, and saluted the king on behalf of his company. Then came the soldiers, who dashed forward at the white visitor in their usually impetuous manner, shaking their spears in his face, brandishing their shields, and making all kinds of menacing gestures, which in this country is their usual way of doing honour to a visitor. They then turned and saluted the king, and took their places.

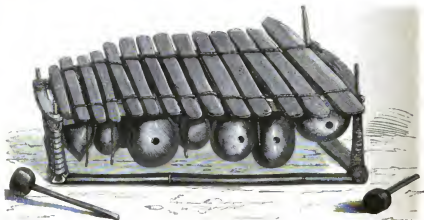
Next came the speeches, Sambanza marching about before Shinte, and announcing in a stentorian voice and with measured accents the whole history of the white men and their reasons for visiting the country.

His argument for giving the travellers leave to pass through the territory was rather an odd one. The white man certainly said that he had come for the purpose of opening

the country for trade, making peace among the various tribes, and teaching them a better religion than their own. Perhaps he was telling lies; for it was not easy to believe that a white man who had such treasures at home would take the trouble of coming out of the sea where he lived for the mere purpose of conferring benefits on those whom he had never seen. On the whole, they rather thought he was not speaking the truth. But still, though he had plenty of fire-arms, he had not attacked the Balonda; and it was perhaps more consistent with Shinte's character as a wise and humane chief, that he should receive the white men kindly, and allow them to pass on.

Between the speeches the women filled up the time by chanting a wild and plaintive melody; and that they were allowed to take more than a passive part in the proceedings was evident from the frequency with which they applauded the various speeches.

Music was also employed at the reception, the instruments being the marimba, which has already been mentioned, and drums. These latter instruments are carved from solid blocks of wood, cut into hollow cylinders, the ends of which are covered with antelope skin, and tightly fastened by a row of small wooden pegs. There is no method of bracing the skins such as we use with our drums, and when the drum-heads become slack they are tightened by being held to the fire. These drums are played with the hand, and not with sticks.



THE MARIMBA, OR AFRICAN PIANO.

The most curious part of these drums is the use of a small square hole in the side, which seems to serve the same purpose as the percussion hole in the European instrument. Instead, however, of being left open, it is closed with a piece of spider's web, which allows the needful escape of air, while it seems to have a resonant effect. The web which is used for this purpose is taken from the egg-case of a large species of spider. It is of a yellow colour, rather larger than a crown-piece in diameter, and is of wonderful toughness and elasticity. The custom of using spider's web in this manner prevails through a very large portion of Africa, and is even found in those parts of Western Africa which have introduced many European instruments among those which belonged to them before they had made acquaintance with civilization.

The drums and marimba are played together; and on this occasion the performers walked round and round the enclosure, producing music which was really not unpleasant even to European ears.

The marimba is found, with various modifications, throughout the whole of this part of Africa. Generally the framework is straight, and in that case the instrument is mostly placed on the ground, and the musician plays it while in a sitting or kneeling

posture. But in some places, especially where it is to be played by the musician on the march, the framework is curved like the tire of a cart-wheel, so that, when the instrument is suspended in front of the performer, he can reach the highest and lowest keys without difficulty. The illustration on page 414 represents one of the straight-framed marimbas, and is drawn from a specimen in Colonel Lane Fox's collection.

After this interview Shinte always behaved very kindly to the whole party, and, as we have already seen, invested Dr. Livingstone with the precious shell ornament before his departure.



MANENKO IN COMMAND.

As to Shinte's niece, Manenko, the female chief, she was a woman who really deserved her rank, from her bold and energetic character. She insisted on conducting the party in her own manner; and when they set out, she headed the expedition in person. It happened to be a singularly unpleasant one, the rain falling in torrents, and yet this very energetic lady marched on at a pace that could be equalled by few of the men, and without the slightest protection from the weather, save the coat of red grease and a charmed necklace. When asked why she did not wear clothes, she said that a chief ought to despise such luxuries, and ought to set an example of fortitude to the rest of the tribe. Nearly all the members of the expedition complained of cold, wet, and hunger, but this indefatigable lady pressed on in the very lightest marching order, and not until they were all thoroughly wearied would she consent to halt for the night.

Her husband, Sambanza, had to march in her train, accompanied by a man who had instructions to beat a drum incessantly, which he did until the perpetual rain soaked the skin-heads so completely that they would not produce a sound. Sambanza had then to

chant all kinds of invocations to the rain, which he did, but without any particular effect.

She knew well what was her dignity, and never allowed it to be encroached upon. On one occasion, Dr. Livingstone had presented an ox to Shinte. Manenko heard of it, and was extremely angry that such a gift should have been made. She said that, as she was the chief of the party who had brought the white men, the ox was hers, and not theirs, as long as she was in command. So she sent for the ox straightway, had it slaughtered by her own men, and then sent Shinte a leg. The latter chief seemed to think that she was justified in what she had done, took the leg, and said nothing about it.

Yet she did not forget that, although she was a chief, she was a woman, and ought therefore to perform a woman's duties. When the party stopped for the night in some village, Manenko was accustomed to go to the huts and ask for some maize, which she ground and prepared with her own hands and brought to Dr. Livingstone, as he could not eat the ordinary country meal without being ill afterwards.

She was also careful to inform him of the proper mode of approaching a Balonda town or village. It is bad manners to pass on and enter a town without having first sent notice to the head-man. As soon as a traveller comes within sight of the houses, he ought to halt, and send forward a messenger to state his name, and ask for permission to enter. The head-man or chief then comes out, meets the stranger under a tree, just as Shinte received Dr. Livingstone, giving him a welcome, and appointing him a place where he may sleep. Before he learned this piece of etiquette, several villages had been much alarmed by the unannounced arrival of the visitors, who were in consequence looked upon with fear and suspicion.

Afterwards, when they came to visit the great chief Katema, they found him quite as friendly as Shinte had been. He received them much after the same manner, being seated, and having around him a number of armed men or guards, and about thirty women behind him. In going to or coming from the place of council, he rode on the shoulders of a man appointed for the purpose, and who, through dint of long practice, performed his task with apparent ease, though he was slightly madd, and Katema was a tall and powerful man. He had a great idea of his own dignity, and made a speech in which he compared himself with Matiamvo, saying that he was the great Moéne, or lord, the fellow of Matiamvo.

He was very proud of a small herd of cattle, about thirty in number, mostly white in colour, and as active as antelopes. He had bred them all himself, but had no idea of utilizing them, and was quite delighted when told that they could be milked, and the milk used for food. It is strange that the Balonda are not a more pastoral people, as the country is admirably adapted for the nurture of cattle, and all those which were possessed by Katema, or even by Matiamvo himself, were in splendid condition. So wild were Katema's cattle, that when the chief had presented the party with a cow, they were obliged to stalk and shoot it, as if it had been a buffalo. The native who shot the cow being a bad marksman, the cow was only wounded, and dashed off into the forest, together with the rest of the herd. Even the herdsman was afraid to go among them, and, after two days' hunting, the wounded cow was at last killed by another ball.

The Balonda are not only fond of cattle, but they do their best to improve the breed. When a number of them went with Dr. Livingstone into Angola, they expressed much contemptuous wonder at the neglect both of land and of domesticated animals. They themselves are always on the look-out for better specimens than their own, and even took the trouble of carrying some large fowls all the way from Angola to Shinte's village. When they saw that even the Portuguese settlers slaughtered little cows and heifer calves, and made no use of the milk, they at once set the white men down as an inferior race. When they heard that the flour used by these same settlers was nearly all imported from a foreign country, they were astonished at the neglect of a land so suited for agriculture as Angola. "These know nothing but buying and selling; they are not men," was the verdict given by the so-called savages.

The food of the Balonda is mostly of a vegetable character, and consists in a great

measure of the manioc, or cassava, which grows in great abundance. There are two varieties of this plant, namely, the sweet and the bitter, *i.e.* the poisonous. The latter, however, is the quicker of growth, and consequently is chiefly cultivated. In order to prepare it for consumption, it is steeped in water for four days, when it becomes partially rotten, the skin comes off easily, and the poisonous matter is readily extracted. It is then dried in the sun, and can be pounded into a sort of meal.

When this meal is cooked, it is simply stirred into boiling water, one man holding the vessel and putting in the meal, while the other stirs it with all his might. The natives like this simple diet very much, but to a European it is simply detestable. It has no flavour except that which arises from partial decomposition, and it looks exactly like ordinary starch when ready for the laundress. It has but little nutritive power, and, however much a man may contrive to eat, he is as hungry two hours afterwards as if he had fasted. Dr. Livingstone compares it in appearance, taste, and odour, to potato starch made from diseased tubers. Moreover, owing to the mode of preparing it, the cooking is exceedingly imperfect, and, in consequence, its effects upon ordinary European digestions may be imagined.

The manioc plant is largely cultivated, and requires but little labour, the first planting involving nearly all the trouble. In the low-lying valleys the earth is dug with the curious Balonda hoe, which has two handles and one blade, and is scraped into parallel beds, about three feet wide and one foot in height, much resembling those in which asparagus is planted in England. In these beds pieces of the manioc stalk are planted at four feet apart. In order to save space, ground nuts, beans, or other plants are sown between the beds, and after the crop is gathered, the ground is cleared of weeds, and the manioc is left to nurture itself. It is fit for eating in a year or eighteen months, according to the character of the soil; but there is no necessity for digging it at once, as it may be left in the ground for three years before it becomes dry and bitter. When a root is dug, the woman cuts off two or three pieces of the stalk, puts them in the hole which she has made, and thus a new crop is begun. Not only the root is edible, but also the leaves, which are boiled and cooked as vegetables.

The Balonda seldom can obtain meat, and even Shinte himself, great chief as he was, had to ask for an ox, saying that his mouth was bitter for the want of meat. The reader may remember that when the ox in question was given, he was very thankful for the single leg which Manenko allowed him to receive. The people are not so fastidious in their food as many other tribes, and they are not above eating mice and other small animals with their tasteless porridge. They also eat fowls and eggs, and are fond of fish, which they catch in a very ingenious manner.

When the floods are out, many fish, especially the silurus, or mosala, as the natives call it, spread themselves over the land. Just before the waters retire, the Balonda construct a number of earthen banks across the outlets, leaving only small apertures for the water to pass through. In these apertures they fix creels or baskets, so made that the fish are forced to enter them as they follow the retreating waters, but, once in, they cannot get out again. Sometimes, instead of earthen walls, they plant rows of mats stretched between sticks, which answer the same purpose.

They also use fish-traps very like our own lobster-pots, and place a bait inside in order to attract the fish. Hooks are also employed; and in some places they descend to the practice of poisoning the water, by which means they destroy every fish, small and great, that comes within range of the deadly juice. The fish when taken are cleaned, split open, and dried in the smoke, so that they can be kept for a considerable time.

Like other Africans, the Balonda make great quantities of beer, which has more a stupefying than an intoxicating character, those who drink it habitually being often seen lying on their faces fast asleep. A more intoxicating drink is a kind of mead which they make, and of which some of them are as fond as the old Ossianic heroes. Shinte had a great idea of the medicinal properties of this mead, and recommended it to Dr. Livingstone when he was very ill with a fever: "Drink plenty of mead," said he, "and it will drive the fever out." Probably on account of its value as a febrifuge, Shinte took plenty of his own prescription.

They have a most elaborate code of etiquette in eating. They will not partake of food which has been cooked by strangers, neither will they eat it except when alone. If a party of Balonda are travelling with men of other tribes, they always go aside to cook their food, and then come back, clap their hands, and return thanks to the leader of the party. Each hut has always its own fire, and, instead of kindling it at the chief's fire, as is the custom with the Damaras, they always light it at once with fire produced by friction.

So careful are the Balonda in this respect, that when Dr. Livingstone killed an ox, and offered some of the cooked meat to his party, the Balonda would not take it, in spite of their fondness for meat, and the very few chances which they have of obtaining it. They did, however, accept some of the raw meat, which they took away and cooked after their own fashion. One of them was almost absurd in the many little fashions which he followed, and probably invented. When the meat was offered to him, he would not take it himself, as it was below his dignity to carry meat. Accordingly he marched home in state, with a servant behind him carrying a few ounces of meat on a platter. Neither would he sit on the grass beside Dr. Livingstone. "He had never sat on the ground during the late Matiamvo's reign, and was not going to degrade himself at his time of life." So he seated himself on a log of wood, and was happy at his untarnished dignity.

One of the little sub-tribes, an offshoot of the Balonda, was remarkable for never eating beef on principle, saying that cattle are like human beings, and live at home like men. There are other tribes who will not keep cattle, because, as they rightly say, the oxen bring enemies and war upon them. But they are always glad to eat beef when they can get it, and this tribe seems to be unique in its abstinence.

Although they have this aversion to beef, they will eat without compunction the flesh of most wild animals, and in many cases display great ingenuity in hunting them. They stalk the animals through the long grass and brushwood, disguising themselves by wearing a cap made of the skin taken from the head of an antelope, to which the horns are still attached. When the animal which they are pursuing begins to be alarmed at the rustling of the boughs or shaking of the grass, they only thrust the horned mask into view, and move it about as if it were the head of a veritable antelope. This device quiets suspicion, and so the hunter proceeds until he is near enough to deliver his arrow. Some of these hunters prefer the head and neck of the jabiru, or great African crane.

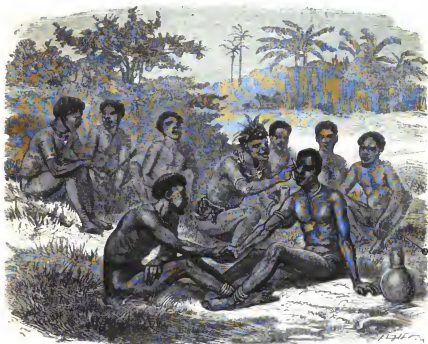
As far as is known, the Balonda are not a warlike people, though they are in the habit of carrying arms, and have a very formidable look. Their weapons are short knife-like swords, shields, and bows and arrows, the latter being iron-headed. The shields are made of reeds plaited firmly together. They are square, or rather oblong, in form, measuring about five feet in length and three in width.

The architecture of the Balonda is simple, but ingenious. Every house is surrounded with a palisade which to all appearance has no door, and is always kept closed, so that a stranger may walk round and round it, and never find the entrance. In one part of the palisade the stakes are not fastened to each other, but two or three are merely stuck into their holes in the ground. When the inhabitants of the huts wish to enter or leave their dwellings, they simply pull up two or three stakes, squeeze themselves through the aperture, and replace them, so that no sign of a doorway is left. The reader may perhaps remember that the little wooden bird-cages in which canaries are brought to England are opened and closed in exactly the same manner, some moveable bars supplying the place of a door.

Sometimes they vary the material of their fences, and make them of tall and comparatively slight rods fastened tightly together. Shinte's palace was formed after this manner, and the interior space was decorated with clumps of trees which had been planted for the sake of the shade which they afforded. That these trees had really been planted, and not merely left standing, was evident from the fact that several young trees were seen recently set, with a quantity of grass twisted round their stems to protect them against the sun. Even the corners of the streets were planted with sugar-canes and bananas, so that the social system of the Balonda seems to be of rather a high order.

One petty chief, called Mozinkwa, had made the hedge of his enclosure of green banian branches, which had taken root, and so formed a living hedge.

It is a pity that so much care and skill should be so often thrown away. As the traveller passes through the Londa districts he often sees deserted houses, and even villages. The fact is, that either the husband or the chief wife has died, and the invariable custom is to desert the locality, and never to revisit it except to make offerings to the dead. Thus it happens that permanent localities are impossible, because the death of a chief's wife



CEMENTING FRIENDSHIP.

would cause the whole village to be deserted, just as is the case with a house when an ordinary man dies. This very house and garden underwent the usual lot, for Mozinkwa lost his favourite wife, and in a few months house, garden, and hedges had all gone to ruin.

The Balonda have a most remarkable custom of cementing friendship. When two men agree to be special friends, they go through a singular ceremony.

The men sit opposite each other with clasped hands, and by the side of each is a vessel of beer. Slight cuts are then made on the clasped hands, on the pit of the stomach, on the right cheek, and on the forehead. The point of a grass blade is then pressed against each of these cuts, so as to take up a little of the blood, and each man washes the grass blade in his own beer-vessel. The vessels are then exchanged and the contents drunk, so that each imbibes the blood of the other. They are then considered as blood relations, and are bound to assist each other in every possible manner. While the beer is being drunk, the friends of each of the men beat on the ground with clubs, and bawl out certain sentences as ratification of the treaty.

It is thought correct for all the friends of each party to the contract to drink a little of the beer. This ceremony is called "kasendi." After the ceremony has been completed, gifts are exchanged, and both parties always give their most precious possessions.

Dr. Livingstone once became related to a young woman in rather a curious manner. She had a tumour in her arm, and asked him to remove it. As he was doing so, a little blood spirted from one the small arteries and entered his eye. As he was wiping it out, she hailed him as a blood relation, and said that whenever he passed through the country he was to send word to her, that she might wait upon him, and cook for him. Men of different tribes often go through this ceremony, and on the present occasion all Dr. Livingstone's men, whether they were Batoka, Makololo, or of other tribes, became *Molekanes*, or friends, to the Balonda.

As to their religious belief, it is but confused and hazy, still it exercises a kind of influence over them. They have a tolerably clear idea of a Supreme Being, whom they call by different names according to their dialect. The Balonda use the word *Zambi*, but *Morimo* is one name which is understood through a very large tract of country. The Balonda believe that *Zambi* rules over all other spirits and minor deities just as their king *Matiamvo* rules over the greater and lesser chiefs. When they undergo the poison ordeal, which is used as much among them as in other tribes, they hold up their hands to heaven, and thus appeal to the Great Spirit to judge according to right.

Among the Balonda we come for the first time among idols or fetishes, whichever may be the correct title.

One form of idol is very common in Balonda villages, and is called by the name of a lion, though a stranger uninitiated in its mysteries would certainly take it for a crocodile, or at all events a lizard of some kind. It is a long cylindrical roll of grass plastered over with clay. One end represents the head, and is accordingly furnished with a mouth, and a couple of cowrie shells by way of eyes. The other end tapers gradually into a tail, and the whole is supported on four short straight legs. The native modeller seems to have a misgiving that the imitation is not quite so close as might be wished, and so sticks in the neck a number of hairs from an elephant's tail, which are supposed to represent the mane.

These singular idols are to be seen in most Balonda villages. They are supposed to represent the deities who have dominion over disease; and when any inhabitant of the village is ill, his friends go to the lion idol, and pray all night before it, beating their drums, and producing that amount of noise which seems to be an essential accompaniment of religious rites among Africans.

Some idols may be perhaps more properly called teraphim, as by their means the medicine men foretell future events. These idols generally rest on a horizontal beam fastened to two uprights—a custom which is followed in Dahomé when a human sacrifice has been made. The medicine men tell their clients that by their ministrations they can force the teraphim to speak, and that thus they are acquainted with the future. They are chiefly brought into requisition in war-time, when they are supposed to give notice of the enemy's approach.

These idols take various shapes. Sometimes they are intended to represent certain animals, and sometimes are fashioned into the rude semblance of the human head. When the superstitious native does not care to take the trouble of carving or modelling an idol, he takes a crooked stick, fixes it in the ground, rubs it with some strange compound, and so his idol is completed.

Trees are pressed into the service of the heathen worshipper. Offerings of maize or manioc root are laid on the branches, and incisions are made in the bark, some being mere knife-cuts, and others rude outlines of the human face. Sticks, too, are thrown on the ground in heaps, and each traveller that passes by is supposed to throw at least one stick on the heap.

Sometimes little models of huts are made, and in them are placed pots of medicine; and in one instance a small farmhouse was seen, and in it was the skull of an ox by way of an idol. The offerings which are made are generally some article of food; and some of the Balonda are so fearful of offending the denizens of the unseen world, that whenever

they receive a present, they always offer a portion of it to the spirits of their dead relations.

One curious legend was told to Dr. Livingstone, and is worthy of mention, because it bears a resemblance to the old mythological story of Latona. There is a certain lake called in Londa-land Dilolo, respecting which the following story was told to the white visitors:

"A female chief, called Moéne (lord) Monenga, came one evening to the village of Mosogo, a man who lived in the vicinity, but who had gone to hunt with his dogs. She asked for a supply of food, and Mosogo's wife gave her a sufficient quantity. Proceeding to another village, standing on the spot now occupied by the water, she preferred the same demand, and was not only refused, but, when she uttered a threat for their niggardliness, was taunted with the question, 'What could she do though she were thus treated?'

"In order to show what she could do, she began a song in slow time, and uttered her own name, 'Monenga-wo-o.' As she prolonged the last note, the village, people, fowls, and dogs sank into the space now called Dilolo. When Kasimakâte, the head-man of the village, came home and found out the catastrophe, he cast himself into the lake, and is supposed to be in it still. The name is taken from 'ilôlo,' despair, because this man gave up all hope when his family was destroyed. Monenga was put to death."

The Balonda are certainly possessed of a greater sense of religion than is the case with tribes which have been described. They occasionally exhibit a feeling of reverence, which implies a religious turn of mind, though the object towards which it may manifest itself be an unworthy one. During Dr. Livingstone's march through the Londa country the party was accompanied by a medicine man belonging to the tribe which was ruled by Manenko. The wizard in question carried his sacred implements in a basket, and was very reverential in his manner towards them. When near these sacred objects, he kept silence as far as possible, and, if he were forced to speak, never raised his voice above a whisper. Once, when a Batoka man happened to speak in his usual loud tones when close to the basket, the doctor administered a sharp reproof, his anxious glances at the basket showing that he was really in earnest.

It so happened that another female chief, called Nyamoana, was of the party, and, when they had to cross a stream that passed by her own village, she would not venture to do so until the doctor had waved his charms over her, and she had further fortified herself by taking some in her hands, and hanging others round her neck.

As the Balonda believe in a Supreme Being, it is evident that they also believe in the immortality of the human spirit. Here their belief has a sort of consistency, and opposes a curious obstacle to the efforts of missionaries; even Dr. Livingstone being unable to make any real impression on them. They fancy that when a Balonda man dies, he may perhaps take the form of some animal, or he may assume his place among the Barimo, or inferior deities, this word being merely the plural form of Morimo. In either case the enfranchised spirit still belongs to earth, and has no aspirations for a higher state of existence.

Nor can the missionary make any impression on their minds with regard to the ultimate destiny of human souls. They admit the existence of the Supreme Being; they see no objection to the doctrine that the Maker of mankind took on Himself the humanity which He had created; they say that they always have believed that man lives after the death of the body; and apparently afford a good basis for instruction in the Christian religion. But, although the teachers can advance thus far, they are suddenly checked by the old objection that white and black men are totally different, and that, although the spirits of deceased white men may go into a mysterious and incomprehensible heaven, the deceased Balonda prefer to remain near their villages which were familiar to them in life, and to assist those who have succeeded them in their duties. This idea may probably account for the habit of deserting their houses after the death of any of the family.

During the funeral ceremonies a perpetual and deafening clamour is kept up, the popular notion seeming to be, that the more noise they can make, the greater honour is due to the deceased. Wailing is carried on with loud piercing cries, drums are beaten,

and, if five-arms have been introduced among them, guns are fired. These drums are not beaten at random, but with regular measured beats. They are played all night long, and their sound has been compared to the regular beating of a paddle-wheel engine. Oxen are slaughtered and the flesh cooked for a feast, and great quantities of beer and mead are drunk. The cost of a funeral in these parts is therefore very great, and it is thought a point of honour to expend as much wealth as can be got together for the purpose.

The religious element is represented by a kind of idol or figure covered with feathers, which is carried about during some parts of the ceremony; and in some places a man, in a strange dress, covered with feathers, dances with the mourners all night, and retires to the feast in the early morning. He is supposed to be the representative of the Barimo, or spirits.

The position of the grave is usually marked with certain objects. One of these graves was covered with a huge cone of sticks laid together like the roof of a hut, and a palisade was erected round the cone. There was an opening on one side, in which was placed an ugly idol, and a number of bits of cloth and strings of beads were hung around.

THE ANGOLESE.

WESTWARD of the country which has just been described is a large district that embraces a considerable portion of the coast, and extends far inwards. This country is well known under the name of Angola. As this country has been held for several centuries by the Portuguese, who have extended their settlements for six or seven hundred miles into the interior, but few of the original manners and customs have survived, and even those have been modified by the contact with white settlers. As, however, Angola is a very important, as well as a large, country, a short account will be given of the natives before we proceed more northward.

The chiefs of the Angolese are elected, and the choice must be made from certain families. In one place there are three families from which the chief is chosen in rotation. The law of succession is rather remarkable, the eldest brother inheriting property in preference to the son; and if a married man dies, his children belong to his widow's eldest brother, who not unfrequently converts them into property by selling them to the slave-dealers. It is in this manner, as has been well remarked, that the slave-trade is supplied, rather than by war.

The inhabitants of this land, although dark, are seldom, if ever, black, their colour being brownish red, with a tinge of yellow; and, although they are so close to the country inhabited by the true negroes, they have but few of the negro traits. Their features are not those of the negro, the nose being rather aquiline, and broad at base, their hair woolly, but tolerably long and very abundant, and their lips moderately thick. The hands and feet are exquisitely small, and, as Mr. Reade observes, Angolese slaves afford a bold contrast with those who are brought from the Congo.

Of the women the same traveller writes in terms of considerable praise, as far as their personal appearance goes. There are girls in that country who have such soft dark eyes, such sweet smiles, and such graceful ways, that they involuntarily win a kind of love, only it is that sort of semi-love which is extended to a dog, a horse, or a bird, and has in it nothing of the intellect. They are gentle, and faithful, and loving in their own way; but, though they can inspire a passion, they cannot retain the love of an intellectual man.

As is the case with the Balonda, the Angolese live greatly on manioc roots, chiefly for the same reason as the Irish peasantry live so much on the potato, *i.e.* because its culture and cooking give very little trouble. The preparation of the soil and planting of

the shrub are the work of slaves, the true Angolese having a very horror of hard work. Consequently the labour is very imperfectly performed, the ground being barely scratched by the double-handled hoe, which is used by dragging it along the ground rather than by striking it into the earth.

The manioc is, however, a far more useful plant than the potato, especially the "sweet" variety, which is free from the poisonous principle. It can be eaten raw, just as it comes out of the ground, or it can be roasted or boiled. Sometimes it is partially fermented, then dried and ground into meal, or reduced to powder by a rasp, mixed with sugar, and made into a sort of confectionery. The leaves can be boiled and eaten as a vegetable, or, if they be given to goats, the latter yield a bountiful supply of milk. The wood affords an excellent fuel, and, when burned, it furnishes a large quantity of potash. On the average, it takes about a year to come to perfection in Angola, and only requires to be weeded once during that time.

The meal or roots cannot be stored, as they are liable to the attacks of a weevil which quickly destroys them, and therefore another plan is followed. The root is scraped like horseradish, and laid on a cloth which is held over a vessel. Water is then poured on it,



CUPPING AND BLEEDING.

and the white shavings are well rubbed with the hands. All the starch-globules are thus washed out of their cells, and pass through the cloth into the vessel below together with the water. When this mixture has been allowed to stand for some time, the starchy matter collects in a sort of sediment, and the water is poured away. The sediment is then scraped out, and placed on an iron plate which is held over a fire. The gelatinous mass is then continually stirred with a stick, and by degrees it forms itself into little translucent globules, which are almost exactly identical with the tapioca of commerce.

The advantage of converting the manioc-root into tapioca is, that in the latter state it is impervious to the destructive weevil.

Some parts of Angola are low, marshy, and fever-breeding, and even the natives feel the effects of the damp, hot, malarious climate. Of medicine, however, they have but little idea, their two principal remedies being cupping and charms.

The former is a remedy which is singularly popular, and is conducted in much the same way throughout the whole of Africa south of the equator. The operator has three

implements, namely, a small horn, a knife, and a piece of wax. The horn is cut quite level at the base, and great care is taken that the edge is perfectly smooth. The smaller end is perforated with a very small hole. This horn is generally tied to a string and hung round the neck of the owner, who is usually a professional physician. The knife is small, and shaped exactly like the little Bechuana knife shown on page 314.

When the cupping-horn is to be used, the wide end is placed on the afflicted part, and pressed down tightly, while the mouth is applied to the small end, and the air exhausted. The operator continues to suck for some moments, and then removes the horn, and suddenly makes three or four gashes with the knife on the raised and reddened skin. The horn is again applied, and when the operator has sucked out the air as far as his lungs will allow him, he places with his tongue a small piece of wax on the end of the horn, introduces his finger into his mouth, presses the wax firmly on the little aperture so as to exclude the air, and then allows the horn to remain adherent by the pressure of the atmosphere. The blood of course runs into the horn, and in a short time coagulates into a flat circular cake. The wax is then removed from the end of the horn, the latter is taken off, the cake of blood put aside, and the process repeated until the operator and patient are satisfied.

Dr. Livingstone mentions a case in which this strange predilection for the cupping-horn clearly hastened, even if it did not produce, the death of a child. The whole story is rather a singular one, and shows the state of religious, or rather superstitious, feeling among the native Angolese. It so happened that a Portuguese trader died in a village, and after his death the other traders met and disposed of his property among themselves, each man accounting for his portion to the relations of the deceased, who lived at Loanda, the principal town of Angola. The generality of the natives, not understanding the nature of written obligations, thought that the traders had simply sold the goods and appropriated the money.

Some time afterwards the child of a man who had bought some of this property fell ill, and the mother sent for the diviner in order to find out the cause of its ailment. After throwing his magic dice, and working himself up to the proper pitch of ecstatic fury, the prophet announced that the child was being killed by the spirit of the deceased trader in revenge for his stolen property. The mother was quite satisfied with the revelation, and wanted to give the prophet a slave by way of a fee. The father, however, was less amenable, and, on learning the result of the investigation, he took a friend with him to the place where the diviner was still in his state of trance, and by the application of two sticks to his back restored him to his senses.

Even after this the ignorant mother would not allow the child to be treated with European medicines, but insisted on cupping it on the cheek; and the consequence was, that in a short time the child died.

The Angolese are a marvellously superstitious people, and, so far from having lost any of their superstitions by four centuries of connexion with the Portuguese, they seem rather to have infected their white visitors with them. Ordeals of several kinds are in great use among them, especially the poison ordeal, which has extended itself through so large a portion of Africa, and slays its thousands annually. One curious point in the Angolese ordeal is, that it is administered in one particular spot on the banks of the river Dua, and that persons who are accused of crime, especially of witchcraft, will travel hundreds of miles to the sacred spot, strong in their belief that the poison-tree will do them no harm. It is hardly necessary to state that the guilt or innocence of the person on trial depends wholly on the caprice of the medicine man who prepares the poisonous draught, and that he may either weaken it or substitute another material without being discovered by these credulous people.

As, according to Balonda ideas, the spirits of the deceased are always with their friends on earth, partaking equally in their joys and sorrows, helping those whom they love, and thwarting those whom they hate, they are therefore supposed to share in an ethereal sort of way in the meals taken by their friends; and it follows that when a man denies himself food, he is not only starving himself, but afflicting the spirits of his ancestors. Sacrifices are a necessary result of this idea, as is the cooking and eating of the flesh by those who offer them.

Their theory of sickness is a very simple one. They fancy that if the spirits of the dead find that their living friends do not treat them properly, and give them plenty to eat and drink, the best thing to do is to take out of the world such useless allies, in order to make room for others who will treat them better. The same idea also runs into their propitiatory sacrifices. If one man kills another, the murderer offers sacrifices to his victim, thinking that if when he first finds himself a spirit, instead of a man, he is treated to an abundant feast, he will not harbour feelings of revenge against the man who sent him out of the world, and deprived him of all its joys and pleasures.

It is said that in some parts of the country human sacrifices are used, a certain sect existing who kill men in order to offer their hearts to the spirits.

Marriages among the Angolese still retain some remnant of their original ceremonies. The bride is taken to a hut, anointed with various charmed preparations, and then left alone while prayers are offered for a happy marriage and plenty of male children, a large family of sons being one of the greatest blessings that can fall to the lot of an Angolese household. Daughters are comparatively despised, but a woman who has never presented her husband with children of either sex is looked upon with the greatest scorn and contempt. Her more fortunate companions are by no means slow in expressing their opinion of her, and in the wedding-songs sung in honour of a bride are sure to introduce a line or two reflecting upon her uselessness, and hoping that the bride will not be so unprofitable a wife as to give neither sons nor daughters to her husband as a recompense for the money which he has paid for her. So bitter are these words, that the woman at whom they were aimed has been more than once known to rush off and destroy herself.

After several days of this performance, the bride is taken to another hut, clothed in all the finery that she possesses or can borrow for the occasion, led out in public, and acknowledged as a married woman. She then goes to her husband's dwelling, but always has a hut to herself.

Into their funeral ceremonies the Angolese contrive to introduce many of their superstitions. Just before death the friends set up their wailing cry (which must be very consolatory to the dying person), and continue this outcry for a day or two almost without cessation, accompanying themselves with a peculiar musical instrument which produces tones of a similar character.

For a day or two the survivors are employed in gathering materials for a grand feast, in which they expend so much of their property that they are often impoverished for years. They even keep pigs and other animals in case some of their friends might die, when they would be useful at the funeral. True to the idea that the spirit of the dead partakes of the pleasures of the living, they feast continually until all the food is expended, interposing their revelling with songs and dances. The usual drum-beating goes on during the time, and scarcely one of the party is to be found sober. Indeed, a man who would voluntarily remain sober would be looked upon as despising the memory of the dead. Dr. Livingstone mentions that a native who appeared in a state of intoxication, and was blamed for it, remarked in a surprised tone, "Why, my mother is dead!"

They have a curious hankering after cross-roads as a place of interment, and although the Portuguese, the real masters of the land, have endeavoured to abolish the custom, they have not yet succeeded in doing so, even though they inflict heavy fines on those who disobeyed them, and appointed places of public interment. Even when the interment of the body in the cross-road itself has been prevented, the natives have succeeded in digging the grave by the side of the path. On and round it they plant certain species of euphorbias, and on the grave they lay various articles, such as cooking-vessels, water-bottles, pipes, and arms. These, however, are all broken and useless, being thought equally serviceable to the dead as the perfect specimens, and affording no temptation to thieves.

A very remarkable and striking picture of the Angolese, their superstitions, and their country, is given by Dr. Livingstone in the following passage:—

"When the natives turn their eyes to the future world, they have a view cheerless enough of their own utter helplessness and hopelessness. They fancy themselves completely in the power of the disembodied spirits, and look upon the prospect of following them as the greatest of misfortunes. Hence they are constantly deprecating the wrath

of departed souls, believing that, if they are appeased, there is no other cause of death but witchcraft, which may be averted by charms.

"The whole of the coloured population of Angola are sunk in these gross superstitions, but have the opinion, notwithstanding, that they are wiser in these matters than their white neighbours. Each tribe has a consciousness of following its own best interests in the best way. They are by no means destitute of that self-esteem which is so common in other nations; yet they fear all manner of phantoms, and have half-developed ideas and traditions of something or other, they know not what. The pleasures of animal life are ever present to their minds as the supreme good; and, but for the innumerable invisibilities, they might enjoy their luxurious climate as much as it is possible for man to do.

"I have often thought, in travelling through their land, that it presents pictures of beauty which angels might enjoy. How often have I beheld in still mornings scenes the very essence of beauty, and all bathed in a quiet air of delicious warmth! yet the occasional soft motion imparted a pleasing sensation of coolness, as of a fan. Green grassy meadows, the cattle feeding, the goats browsing, the kids skipping; the groups of herd-boys with miniature bows, arrows, and spears; the women wending their way to the river, with water-pots poised jauntily on their heads; men sewing under the shady banians; and old grey-headed fathers sitting on the ground, with staff in hand, listening to the morning gossip, while others carry trees or branches to repair their hedges; and all this, flooded with the bright African sunshine, and the birds singing among the branches before the heat of the day has become intense, form pictures which can never be forgotten."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE WAGOGO AND WANYAMUEZI.

THE MANY AND TRANSITORY TRIBES OF AFRICA—UOOOO AND THE PEOPLE—UNPLEASANT CHARACTER OF THE WAGOGO—THEFT AND EXTORTION—WAGOGO GREEDINESS—THE WANYAMUEZI OR WEEZER TRIBE—THEIR VALUE AS GUIDES—DRESS OF THE MEN—"SAMBO" RINGS—WOMAN'S DRESS AND ORNAMENTS—HAIR-DRESSING—GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE WOMEN—WEEZER ARCHITECTURE—USE OF THE DRUM—SALUTATION—SULTAN STIRABOUT—THE HUSBAND'S WELCOME—GAMES AND DANCES—SHAM FIGHTS—PITCH AND TOSS—NIGHT IN A WEEZER VILLAGE—BREWING AND DRINKING POMBE—A HARVEST SCENE—SUPERSTITIONS—FUNERALS.

We will now pass from the west to the east of Africa, and accompany Captains Speke and Grant in their journey through the extraordinary tribes that exist between Zanzibar and Northern Africa. It will be impossible to describe in detail the many tribes that inhabit this track, or even to give the briefest account of them. We shall therefore select a few of the most important among them, and describe them as fully as our very limited space will permit.

Perhaps the reader may think it strange that we are lingering so long in this part of the world. The reason is, that Africa, southern and equatorial, is filled with a bewildering variety of singular tribes, each of which has manners and customs unique in themselves, and presents as great a contrast to its neighbours as if they were separated by seas or mountain ranges. Sometimes they merge into each other by indefinable gradations, but often the line of demarcation is boldly and sharply drawn, so that the tribe which inhabits one bank of a river is utterly unlike that which occupies the opposite bank, in appearance, in habits, and in language. In one case, for example, the people who live on one side of the river are remarkable for the scrupulous completeness with which both sexes are clad, while on the other side no clothing whatever is worn.

The same cause which has given us the knowledge of these remarkable tribes will inevitably be the precursor of their disappearance. The white man has set his foot on their soil, and from that moment may be dated their gradual but certain decadence. They have learned the value of fire-arms, and covet them beyond everything. Their chiefs have already abandoned the use of their native weapons, having been wealthy enough to purchase muskets from the white men, or powerful enough to extort them as presents. The example which they have set is sure to extend to the people, and a few years will therefore witness the entire abandonment of native-made weapons. With the weapons their mode of warfare will be changed, and in course of time the whole people will undergo such modifications that they will be an essentially different race. It is the object of this work to bring together, as far as possible in a limited space, the most remarkable of these perishing usages, and it is therefore necessary to expend the most space on the country that affords most of them.

The line that we now have to follow can be seen by turning to the map of Africa on page 37. We shall start from Zanzibar on the east coast, go westward and northward,

passing by the Unyamuezi and Wahuma to the great N'yanza lakes. Here we shall come upon the track of Sir Samuel Baker, and shall then accompany him northward among the tribes which he visited.

Passing by a number of tribes which we cannot stop to investigate, we come upon the Wagogo, who inhabit Ugogo, a district about lat. 4° S. and long. 36° E. Here I may mention that, although the language of some of these tribes is so different that the people cannot understand each other, in most of them the prefix "Wa" indicates plurality, like the word "men" in English. Thus the people of Ugogo are the Wagogo, and the inhabitants of Unyamuezi are the Wanyamuezi, pronounced, for brevity's sake, Weezee. An individual of the Wagogo is called Mgogo.

The Wagogo are a wild set of people, such as might be expected from the country in which they live. Their colour is reddish brown, with a tinge of black; and when the skin happens to be clean, it is said to look like a very ripe plum. They are scanty dressers, wearing little except a cloth of some kind round the waist; but they are exceedingly fond of ornaments, by means of which they generally contrive to make themselves as ugly as possible. Their principal ornament is the tubular end of a gourd, which is thrust through the ear; but they also decorate their heads with hanks of bark-fibre, which they twist among their thick woolly hair, and which have a most absurd appearance when the wearer is running or leaping. Sometimes they weave strings of beads into the hair in similar manner, or fasten an ostrich feather upon their heads.

They are not a warlike people, but, like others who are not remarkable for courage, they always go armed; a Mgogo never walking without his spear and shield, and perhaps a short club, also to be used as a missile. The shield is oblong, and made of leather, and the spear has nothing remarkable about it; and, as Captain Speke remarks, these weapons are carried more for show than for use.

They are not a pleasant people, being avaricious, intrusive, and inquisitive, ingrained liars, and sure to bully if they think they can do so with safety. If travellers pass through their country, they are annoying beyond endurance, jeering at them with words and insolent gestures, intruding themselves among the party, and turning over everything that they can reach, and sometimes even forcing themselves into the tents. Consequently the travellers never enter the villages, but encamp at some distance from them, under the shelter of the wide-spreading "gouty-limbed trees" that are found in this country, and surround their camp with a strong hedge of thorns, which the naked Mgogo does not choose to encounter.

Covetous even beyond the ordinary avarice of African tribes, the Wagogo seize every opportunity of fleecing travellers who come into their territory. Beside the usual tax, or "hongo," which is demanded for permission to pass through the country, they demand all sorts of presents, or rather bribes. When one of Captain Speke's porters happened to break a bow by accident, the owner immediately claimed as compensation something of ten times its value.

Magomba, the chief, proved himself an adept at extortion. First he sent a very polite message, requesting Captain Speke to reside in his own house, but this flattering though treacherous proposal was at once declined. In the first place, the houses of this part of the country are small and inconvenient, being nothing more than mud huts with flat-topped roofs, this kind of architecture being called by the name of "tembe." In the next place, the chief's object was evidently to isolate the leader of the expedition from his companions, and so to have a hold upon him. This he could more easily do, as the villages are strongly walled, so that a traveller who is once decoyed inside them could not escape without submitting to the terms of the inhabitants. Unlike the villages of the southern Africans, which are invariably circular, these are invariably oblong, and both the walls and the houses are made of mud.

Next day Magomba had drunk so much pombe that he was quite unfit for business, but on the following day the hongo was settled, through the chief's prime minister, who straightway did a little business on his own account by presenting a small quantity of food, and asking for an adequate return, which, of course, meant one of twenty times its value. Having secured this, he proceeded to further extortion by accusing Captain

Grant of having shot a lizard on a stone which he was pleased to call sacred. Then none of them would give any information without being paid for it. Then, because they thought that their extortion was not sufficiently successful, they revenged themselves by telling the native porters such horrifying tales of the countries which they were about to visit and the cruelty of the white men, that the porters were frightened, and ran away, some forgetting to put down their loads.

These tactics were repeated at every village near which the party had to pass, and at one place the chief threatened to attack Captain Speke's party, and at the same time sent word to all the porters that they had better escape, or they would be killed. Half of them



WAGOGO GREEDINESS.

did escape, taking with them the goods which would have been due to them as payment; and, as appeared afterwards, the rascally Wagogo had arranged that they should do so, and then they would go shares in the plunder.

They were so greedy, that they not only refused to sell provisions except at an exorbitant rate, but when the leaders of the expedition shot game to supply food for their men, the Wagogo flocked to the spot in multitudes, each man with his arms, and did their best to carry off the meat before the rightful owners could reach it. Once, when they were sadly in want of food, Captain Speke went at night in search of game, and shot a rhinoceros. By earliest dawn he gave notice to his men that there was plenty of meat for them.

"We had all now to hurry back to the carcass before the Wagogo could find it; but though this precaution was quickly taken, still, before the tough skin of the beast could be cut through, the Wagogo began assembling like vultures, and fighting with my men.

"A more savage, filthy, disgusting, but at the same time grotesque, scene than that which followed cannot be described. All fell to work with swords, spears, knives, and hatchets, cutting and slashing, thumping and bawling, fighting and tearing, up to their knees in filth and blood in the middle of the carcase. When a tempting morsel fell to the possession of any one, a stronger neighbour would seize and bear off the prize in triumph. All right was now a matter of pure might, and lucky it was that it did not end in a fight between our men and the villagers. These might be afterwards seen, covered with blood, scampering home each one with his spoil—a piece of tripe, or liver, or lights, or whatever else it might have been his fortune to get off with."

It might be imagined that the travellers were only too glad to be fairly out of the dominions of this tribe, who had contrived to cheat and rob them in every way, and had moreover, through sheer spite and covetousness, frightened away more than a hundred porters who had been engaged to carry the vast quantities of goods with which the traveller must bribe the chiefs of the different places through which he passes.

THE WANYAMUEZI.

THE next tribe which we shall mention is that which is called Wanyamuezi. Fortunately the natives seldom use this word in full, and speak of themselves as Weeze, a word much easier to say, and certainly simpler to write. In the singular the name is Myamuezi. The country which they inhabit is called Unyamuezi, the Country of the Moon.

For many reasons this is a most remarkable tribe. They are almost the only people near Central Africa who will willingly leave their own country, and, for the sake of wages, will act as porters or guides to distant countries. It seems that this capability of travel is hereditary among them, and that they have been from time immemorial the greatest trading tribe in Africa. It was to this tribe that the porters belonged who were induced by the Wagogo to desert Captain Speke, and none knew better than themselves that in no other tribe could he find men to supply their places.

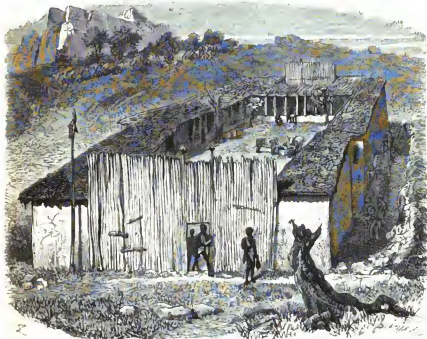
Unyamuezi is a large district about the size of England, in lat. 5° S. and between long. 3° and 5° E. Formerly it must have been a great empire, but it has now suffered the fate of most African tribes, and is split into a number of petty tribes, each jealous of the other, and each liable to continual subdivision.

The Weeze are not a handsome race, being inferior in personal appearance to the Wagogo, though handsome individuals of both sexes may be found among them. Like the Wagogo, they are not a martial race, though they always travel with their weapons, such as they are, i.e. a very inefficient bow and a couple of arrows. Their dress is simple enough. They wear the ordinary cloth round the loins; but when they start on a journey they hang over their shoulders a dressed goatskin, which passes over one shoulder and under the other. On account of its narrowness, it can hardly answer any purpose of warmth, and for the same reason can hardly be intended to serve as a covering. However, it seems to be the fashion, and they all wear it.

They decorate themselves with plenty of ornaments, some of which are used as amulets, and the others merely worn as decoration. They have one very curious mode of making their bracelets. They take a single hair of a giraffe's tail, wrap it round with wire, just like the bass string of a violin, and then twist this compound rope round their wrists or ankles. These rings are called by the name of "sambo," and, though they are mostly worn by women, the men will put them on when they have nothing better. Their usual bracelets are, however, heavy bars of copper or iron, beaten into the proper shape. Like other natives in the extreme south, they knock out the two central incisor

teeth of the lower jaw, and chip a V-like space between the corresponding teeth of the upper jaw.

The women are far better dressed. They wear tolerably large cloths made by themselves of native cotton, and cover the whole body from under the arms to below the knees. They wear the sambo rings in vast profusion, winding them round and round their wrists and ankles until the limbs are sheathed in metallic armour for six or seven inches. If they can do so, they naturally prefer wearing calico and other materials brought from Europe, partly because it is a sign of wealth, and partly because it is much lighter than the native-made cotton cloths, though not so durable.



ARCHITECTURE OF THE WEEEEK

Their woolly hair is plentifully dressed with oil and twisted up, until at a little distance they look as if they had a head-dress of black-beetle shards. Sometimes they screw it into tassels, and hang beads at the end of each tassel, or decorate them with little charms made of beads. The manner in which these "tags" are made is very simple. There is a kind of banian tree called the miambo, and from this are cut a quantity of slender twigs. These twigs are then split longitudinally, the outer and inner bark separated, and then well chewed until the fibres are properly arranged. At first they are much lighter in colour than the black woolly hair to which they are fastened, but they soon become blackened by use and grease. They use a little tattooing, but not much, making three lines on each temple, and another down the middle of the nose. Lines of blue are often seen on the foreheads of both sexes, but these are the permanent remains of the peculiar treatment which they pursue for the headache, and which, with them, seems to be effectual.

The character of the women is, on the whole, good, as they are decent and well conducted and, for savages, tidy, though scarcely clean in their persons. They will sometimes accompany their husbands on the march, and have a weakness for smoking all the time that they walk. They carry their children on their backs, a stool or two and other implements on their heads, and yet contrive to act as cooks as soon as they halt, preparing some savoury dish of herbs for their husbands. They have a really wonderful knowledge of practical botany, and a Weezee will live in comfort where a man from another tribe would starve. Besides cooking, they also contrive to run up little huts made of boughs, in shape like a reversed bell, and very tiny, but yet large enough to afford shelter during sleep.

The houses of the Weezee are mostly of that mud-walled, flat-topped kind which is called "tembe," though some are shaped like haystacks, and they are built with considerable care. Some of these have the roof extending beyond the walls, so as to form a verandah like that of a Bechuana house; and the villages are surrounded with a strong fence. The door is very small, and only allows one person to pass at a time. It is made of boards, and can be lifted to allow ingress and egress. Some of the stakes above and at the side of the door are decorated with blocks of wood on their tops; and some of the chiefs are in the habit of fixing on the posts the skulls of those whom they have put to death, just as in former years the heads of traitors were fixed over Temple Bar.

Some of the villages may lay claim to the title of fortified towns, so elaborately are they constructed. The palisading which surrounds them is very high and strong, and defended in a most artistic manner, first by a covered way, then a quickset hedge of euphorbia, and, lastly, a broad dry ditch, or moat. Occasionally the wall is built out in bastion-fashion, so as to give a good flanking fire. Within the valleys the houses extend to the right and left of the entrances, and are carefully railed off, so that the whole structure is really a very strong one in a military point of view.

They are a tolerably polite race, and have a complete code of etiquette for receiving persons, whether friends or strangers. If a chief receives another chief, he gets up quite a ceremony, assembling all the people of the village with their drums and other musical instruments, and causing them to honour the coming guest with a dance, and as much noise as can be extracted out of their meagre band. If they have fire-arms, they will discharge them as long as their powder lasts; and if not, they content themselves with their voices, which are naturally loud, the drums, and any other musical instrument that they may possess.

But, whatever may be used, the drum is a necessity in these parts, and is indispensable to a proper welcome. Even when the guest takes his leave, the drum is an essential accompaniment of his departure; and, accordingly, "beating the drum" is a phrase which is frequently used to signify departure from a place. For example, if a traveller is passing through a district, and is bargaining with the chief for the "hongo" which he has to pay, the latter will often threaten that, unless he is paid his demands in full, he will not "beat the drum," i.e. will not permit the traveller to pass on. So well is this known, that the porters do not take up their burdens until they hear the welcome sound of the drum. This instrument often calls to war, and, in fact, can be made to tell its story as completely as the bugle of European armies.

When ordinary men meet their chief, they bow themselves and clap their hands twice, and the women salute him by making a courtesy as well as any lady at court. This, however, is an obeisance which is only vouchsafed to very great chiefs, the petty chiefs, or head-men of villages, having to content themselves with the simple clapping of hands.

If two women of unequal rank meet, the inferior drops on one knee, and bows her head; the superior lays one hand on the shoulder of the other; and they remain in this position for a few moments, while they mutter some words in an undertone. They then rise and talk freely.

To judge from Captain Graut's account of the great chief Ugalee (i.e. Stirshout), who was considered a singularly favourable specimen of the sultans, as these great chiefs are called, the deference paid to them is given to the office, and not to the individual who

holds it. Ugalee, who was the finest specimen that had been seen, was supposed to be a clever man, though he did not know his own age, nor could count above ten, nor had any names for the day of the week, the month, or the year.

"After we had been about a month in his district, Sultan Ugalee arrived at Mineenga on the 21st of April, and was saluted by file-firing from our volunteers and shrill cries from the women. He visited us in the verandah the day following. He looks about twenty-two years of age; has three children and thirty wives; is six feet high, stout, with a stupid, heavy expression. His bare head is in tassels, hanks of fibre being mixed in with the hair. His body is loosely wrapped round with a blue and yellow cotton cloth, his loins are covered with a dirty bit of oily calico, and his feet are large and naked. A monster ivory ring is on his left wrist, while the right one bears a copper ring of rope pattern; several hundreds of wire rings are massed round his ankles.

"He was asked to be seated on one of our iron stools, but looked at first frightened, and did not open his mouth. An old man spoke for him, and a crowd of thirty followers squatted behind him. Speke, to amuse him, produced his six-barrelled revolver, but he merely eyed it intently. The book of birds and animals, on being shown to him upside down by Sirboko, the head man of the village, drew from him a sickly smile, and he was pleased to imply that he preferred the animals to the birds. He received some snuff in the palm of his hand, took a good pinch, and gave the rest to his spokesman.

"He wished to look at my mosquito-curtained bed, and in moving away was invited to dine with us. We sent him a message at seven o'clock that the feast was prepared, but a reply came that he was full, and could not be tempted even with a glass of rum. The following day he came to bid us good bye, and left without any exchange of presents, being thus very different from the grasping race of Ugogo."

It has been mentioned that the Wanyamuezi act as traders, and go to great distances, and there is even a separate mode of greeting by which a wife welcomes her husband back from his travels. As soon as she hears that her husband is about to arrive home after his journey to the coast, she puts on all her ornaments, decorates herself with a feathered cap, gathers her friends round her, and proceeds to the hut of the chief's principal wife, before whose door they all dance and sing.

Dancing and singing are with them, as with other tribes, their chief amusement. There was a blind man who was remarkable for his powers of song, being able to send his voice to a considerable distance with a sort of ventriloquial effect. He was extremely



WEZEE SALUTATION.

popular, and in the evenings the chief himself would form one of the audience, and join in the chorus with which his song was accompanied. They have several national airs which, according to Captains Speke and Grant, are really fine.

Inside each village there is a club-house, or "Iwansa," as it is called. This is a structure much larger than those which are used for dwelling-houses, and is built in a



THE HUSBAND'S WELCOME.

different manner. One of these iwansas, which was visited by Captain Grant, "was a long, low room, twelve by eighteen feet, with one door, a low flat roof, well blackened with smoke, and no chimney. Along its length there ran a high inclined bench, on which cow-skins were spread for men to take their seats. Some huge drums were hung in one corner, and logs smouldered on the floor.



TWEEZERS.

"Into this place strangers are ushered when they first enter the village, and here they reside until a house can be appropriated to them. Here the young men all gather at the close of day to hear the news, and join in that interminable talk which seems one of the chief joys of a native African. Here they performed kindly offices to each other, such as pulling out the hairs of the eyelashes and eyebrows with their curious little tweezers, chipping the teeth into the correct form, and marking on the cheeks and temples the peculiar marks which designate the clan to which they belong."

The two pairs of tweezers shown in the illustration are drawn from specimens in Colonel Lane Fox's collection. They are made of iron, most ingeniously flattened and bent so as to give the required elasticity. These instruments are made of different sizes, but they are seldom much larger than those represented in the illustration.

Smoking and drinking also go on largely in the iwansa, and here the youths indulge in various games. One of these games is exactly similar to one which has been introduced into England. Each player has a stump of Indian corn, cut short, which he stands on the ground in front of him. A rude sort of tectotum is made of a gourd and a stick, and is spun among the corn-stumps, the object of the game being to knock down the stump belonging to the adversary. This is a favourite game, and elicits much noisy laughter and applause, not only from the actual players, but from the spectators who surround them.

In front of the iwansa the dances are conducted. They are similar in some respects to those of the Damaras, as mentioned on page 347, except that the performers stand in a line instead of in a circle. A long strip of bark or cow-skin is laid on the ground, and the Weezees arrange themselves along it, the tallest man always taking the place of honour in the middle. When they have arranged themselves, the drummers strike up their noisy instruments, and the dancers begin a strange chant, which is more like a howl than a song. They all bow their heads low, put their hands on their hips, stamp vigorously, and are pleased to think that they are dancing. The male spectators stand in front and encourage their friends by joining in the chorus, while the women stand behind and look on silently. Each dance ends with a general shout of laughter or applause, and then a fresh set of dancers take their place on the strip of skin.

Sometimes a variety is introduced into their dances. On one occasion the chief had a number of bowls filled with pombé and set in a row. The people took their grass bowls and filled them again and again from the jars, the chief setting the example, and drinking more pombé than any of his subjects. When the bowls had circulated plentifully, a couple of lads leaped into the circle, presenting a most fantastic appearance. They had tied zebra manes over their heads, and had furnished themselves with two long bark tubes like huge bassoons, into which they blew with all their might, accompanying their shouts with extravagant contortions of the limbs. As soon as the pombé was all gone, five drums were hung in a line upon a horizontal bar, and the performer began to hammer them furiously. Inspired by the sounds, men, women, and children began to sing and clap their hands in time, and all danced for several hours.

"The Weezee boys are amusing little fellows, and have quite a talent for games. Of course they imitate the pursuits of their fathers, such as shooting with small bows and arrows, jumping over sticks at various heights, pretending to shoot game, and other amusements. Some of the elder lads converted their play into reality, by making their bows and arrows large enough to kill the pigeons and other birds which flew about them. They also make very creditable imitations of the white man's gun, tying two pieces of cane together for the barrels, modelling the stock, hammer, and trigger-guard out of clay, and imitating the smoke by tufts of cotton-wool. That they were kind-hearted boys is evident from the fact that they had tamed birds in cages, and spent much time in teaching them to sing."

From the above description it may be inferred that the Weezees are a lively race, and such indeed is the fact. To the traveller they are amusing companions, singing their "jolliest of songs, with deep-toned choruses, from their thick necks and throats." But they require to be very carefully managed, being independent as knowing their own value, and apt to go on, or halt, or encamp just when it happens to suit them. Moreover, as they are not a cleanly race, and are sociably fond of making their evening fire close by and to windward of the traveller's tent, they are often much too near to be agreeable, especially as they always decline to move from the spot on which they have established themselves.

Still they are simply invaluable on the march, for they are good porters, can always manage to make themselves happy, and do not become homesick, as is the case with men of other tribes. Moreover, from their locomotive habits, they are excellent guides, and

they are most useful assistants in hunting, detecting, and following up the spoor of an animal with unerring certainty. They are rather too apt to steal the flesh of the animal when it is killed, and quite sure to steal the fat, but, as in nine cases out of ten it would not have been killed at all without their help, they may be pardoned for those acts of petty larceny. They never seem at a loss for anything, but have a singular power of supplying themselves out of the most unexpected materials. For example, if a Wanyamuezi wants to smoke, and has no pipe, he makes a pipe in a minute or two from the



WANYAMUEZI DANCE

nearest tree. All he has to do is to cut a green twig, strip the bark off it as boys do when they make willow whistles, push a plug of clay into it, and bore a hole through the clay with a smaller twig or a grass-blade.

Both sexes are inveterate smokers, and, as they grow their own tobacco, they can gratify this taste to their hearts' content. For smoking, they generally use their home-cured tobacco, which they twist up into a thick rope like a hayband, and then coil into a flattened spiral like a small target. Sometimes they make it into a sugar-loaf shape. Imported tobacco they employ as snuff, grinding it to powder if it should be given to them in a solid form, or pushing it into their nostrils if it should be in a cut state, like "bird's-eye" or "returns."

The amusements of the Weezes are tolerably numerous. Besides those which have been mentioned, the lads are fond of a mimic fight, using the stalks of maize instead of spears, and making for themselves shields of bark. Except that the Weeze lads are on foot, instead of being mounted, this game is almost exactly like the "djerid" of the Turks, and is quite as ^{likin'} to inflict painful, if not dangerous, injuries on the careless or unskilful.

Then, for more sedentary people, there are several games of chance and others of skill. The game of chance is the time-honoured "pitch and toss," which is played as eagerly here as in England. It is true that the Weezee have no halfpence, but they can always cut discs out of bark, and bet upon the rough or smooth side turning uppermost. They are very fond of this game, and will stake their most valued possessions, such as "sambo" rings, bows, arrows, spear-heads, and the like.

The chief game of skill has probably reached them through the Mohammedan traders, as it is almost identical with a game long familiar to the Turks. It is called *Bao*, and is played with a board on which are thirty-two holes or cups, and with sixty-four seeds by way of counters. Should two players meet and neither possess a board nor the proper seeds, nothing is easier than to sit down, scrape thirty-two holes in the ground, select sixty-four stones, and then begin to play. The reader may perhaps call to mind the old English game of *Merelles*, or *Nine-men's Morris*, which can be played on an extemporized board cut in the turf, and with stones instead of counters.

The most inveterate gamblers were the lifeguards of the sultan, some twenty in number. They were not agreeable personages, being offensively supercilious in their manner, and flatly refusing to do a stroke of work. The extent of their duty lay in escorting their chief from one place to another, and conveying his orders from one village to another. The rest of their time was spent in gambling, drum-beating, and similar amusements; and if they distinguished themselves in any other way, it was by the care which they bestowed on their dress. Some of these lifeguards were very skilful in beating the drum, and when a number were performing on a row of suspended drums, the principal drummer always took the largest instrument, and was the conductor of the others, just as in a society of bellringers the chief of them takes the tenor bell.

For any one, except a native, to sleep in a Weezee village while the drums are sounding is perfectly impossible, but when they have ceased the place is quiet enough, as may be seen by Captain Grant's description of a night scene in *Wanyamuezi*.

"In a Weezee village there are few sounds to disturb one's night's rest: the traveller's horn, and the reply to it from a neighbouring village, are accidental alarms; the chirping of crickets, and the cry from a sick child, however, occasionally broke upon the stillness of one's night. Waking early, the first sounds we heard were the crowing of cocks, the impatient lowing of cows, the bleating of calves, and the chirping of sparrows and other unmusical birds. The pestle and mortar shelling corn would soon after be heard, or the cooing of wild pigeons in the grove of palms.

"The huts were shaped like corn-stacks, supported by bare poles, fifteen feet high, and fifteen to eighteen feet in diameter. Sometimes their grass roofs would be protected from sparks by 'michans,' or frames of Indian corn-stalks. There were no carpets, and all was as dark as the hold of a ship. A few earthen jars, made like the Indian 'gurrah,' for boiling vegetables or stirabout, tattered skins, an old bow and arrow, some cups of grass, some gourds, perhaps a stool, constitute the whole of the furniture. Grain was housed in hard boxes of bark, and goats or calves had free access over the house."

Their customs in eating and drinking are rather remarkable. Perhaps we ought to transfer those terms, drinking holding the first place in the mind of a Weezee. The only drink which he cares about is the native beer or "pombé," and many of the natives live almost entirely on pombé, taking scarcely any solid nourishment whatever.

Pombé-making is the work of the women, who brew large quantities at a time. Not being able to build a large tank in which the water can be heated to the boiling point, the pombé-maker takes a number of earthen pots and places them in a double row, with an interval of eighteen inches or so between the rows. This intermediate space is filled with wood, which is lighted, and the fire tended until the beer is boiled simultaneously in both rows of pots. Five days are required for completing the brewing.

The Sultan *Ukulima* was very fond of pombé, and, indeed, lived principally upon it. He used to begin with a bowl of his favourite beverage, and continue drinking it at intervals until he went to his tiny sleeping-hut for the night. Though he was half stupified during the day, he did not suffer in health, but was a fine, sturdy, hale old man, pleasant enough in manner, and rather amusing when his head happened to be clear. He

was rather fond of a practical joke, and sometimes amused himself by begging some quinine, mixing it slyly with pombé, and then enjoying the consternation which appeared on the countenances of those who partook of the bitter draught.

Every morning he used to go round to the different houses, timing his visits so as to appear when the brewing was finished. He always partook of the first bowl of beer, and then went on to another house and drank more pombé, which he sometimes sucked

through a reed in sherry-cobbler fashion. Men and women seldom drink in company; the latter assembling together under the presidency of the sultana, or chief wife, and drinking in company.

As to food, regular meals seem to be almost unknown among the men, who "drop in" at their friends' houses, taking a small potato at one place, a bowl of pombé at another, and, on rare occasions, a little beef. Indeed, Captain Grant says that he seldom saw men at their meals, unless they were assembled for pombé drinking. Women, however, who eat, as they drink, by themselves, are more regular in their meals, and at stated times have their food prepared.

The grain from which the pombé is made is cultivated by the women, who undertake most, though not all, of its preparation. When it is green, they reap it by cutting off the ears with a knife, just as was done by the Egyptians of ancient times. They then carry the ears in baskets to the village, empty them out upon the ground, and spread them in the sunbeams until they are thoroughly dried. The men then thrash out the grain with curious flails, looking like rackets, with handles eight or nine feet in length.

When thrashed, it is stored away in various fashions. Sometimes it is made into a miniature

corn-rick placed on legs, like the "staddles" of our own farmyards. Sometimes a pole is stuck into the earth, and the corn is bound round it at some distance from the ground, so that it resembles an angler's float of gigantic dimensions. The oddest, though perhaps the safest, way of packing grain is to tie it up in a bundle, and hang it to the branch of a tree. When wanted for use, it is pounded in a wooden mortar like those of the Ovambo tribe, in order to beat off the husk, and finally it is ground between two stones.

The Wanyamuezi are not a very superstitious people,—at all events they are not such slaves to superstition as many other tribes. As far as is known, they have no idols, but then they have no religious system, except perhaps a fear of evil spirits, and a belief that

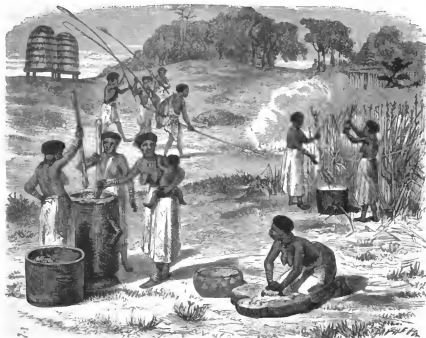


DRINKING POMBÉ.

such spirits can be exorcised by qualified wizards. A good account of one of these exorcisions is given by Captain Grant.

"The sultan sits at the doorway of his hut, which is decorated with lion's paws.

"His daughter, the possessed, is opposite to him, completely hooded, and guarded by two Watusi women, one on each side, holding a naked spear erect. The sultana com-



HARVEST SCENE.

pletes the circle. Pombé is spirted up in the air so as to fall upon them all. A cow is then brought in with its mouth tightly bound up, almost preventing the possibility of breathing, and it is evident that the poor cow is to be the sacrifice.

"One spear-bearer gives the animal two gentle taps with a hatchet between the horns, and she is followed by the woman with the evil spirit and by a second spear-bearer, who also tap the cow. A man now steps forward, and with the same hatchet kills the cow by a blow behind the horns. The blood is all caught in a tray (a Kaffir custom), and placed at the feet of the possessed, after which a spear-bearer puts spots of the blood on the woman's forehead, on the root of the neck, the palms of the hands, and the instep of the feet. He spots the other spear-bearers in the same manner, and the tray is then taken by another man, who spots the sultan, his kindred, and household.

"Again the tray is carried to the feet of the possessed, and she spots with the blood her little son and nephews, who kneel to receive it. Sisters and female relatives come next to be anointed by her, and it is pleasant to see those dearest to her pressing forward with congratulations and wishes. She then rises from her seat, uttering a sort of whining cry, and walks off to the house of the sultana, preceded and followed by spear-bearers.

During the day she walks about the village, still hooded, and attended by several followers shaking gourds containing grain, and singing 'Heigh-ho, massa-a-no,' or 'masanga.' An old woman is appointed to wrestle with her for a broomstick which she carries, and finally the stick is left in her hand.

"Late in the afternoon a change is wrought; she appears as in ordinary, but with her face curiously painted in the same way. She sits without smiling to receive offerings of grain, with beads or anklets placed on twigs of the broomstick, which she holds upright; and this over, she walks among the women, who shout out, 'Gnombe!' (cow), or some other ridiculous expression to create a laugh. This winds up the ceremony on the first day, but two days afterwards the now emancipated woman is seen parading about with the broomstick hung with beads and rings, and looking herself again, being completely cured. The vanquished spirit had been forced to fly!"

Like many other African tribes, the Weezees fully believe that when a person is ill witchcraft must have been the cause of the malady, and once, when Captain Grant was in their country, a man who used to sell fish to him died suddenly. His wife was at once accused of murdering him by poison (which is thought to be a branch of sorcery), was tried, convicted, and killed. The truth of the verdict was confirmed by the fact that the hyenas did not touch the body after death.

They have all kinds of odd superstitions about animals. Captain Grant had shot an antelope, which was quite new to him, and which was therefore a great prize. With the unwilling aid of his assistant he carried it as far as the village, but there the man laid it down, declining to carry it within the walls on the plea that it was a dangerous animal, and must not be brought to the houses. The Sultan Ukalima was then asked to have it brought in, but the man, usually so mild, flew at once into a towering rage, and would not even allow a piece of the skin to be brought within the village. He said that if its flesh were eaten it would cause the fingers and toes to fall off, and that if its saliva touched the skin an ulcer would be the result. Consequently, the skin was lost, and only a sketch preserved. These ideas about the "bawala," as this antelope was called, did not seem to have extended very far; for, while the body was still lying outside the walls, a party of another tribe came up, and were very glad to cook it and eat it on the spot.

All lions and lynxes are the property of the sultan. No one may wear the lion-skin except himself, and he decorates his dwelling with the paws and other spoils. This may be expected, as the lion-skin is considered as an emblem of royalty in other lands beside Africa. But there is a curious superstition about the lion, which prohibits any one from walking round its body, or even its skin. One day, when a lion had been killed, and its body brought into the village, Captain Grant measured it, and was straightway assailed by the chief priest of the place for breaking the law in walking round the animal while he was measuring it. He gave as his reason that there was a spell laid on the lions which kept them from entering the villages, and that the act of walking round the animal broke the spell. He said, however, that a payment of four cloths to him would restore the efficacy of the spell, and then he would not tell the sultan. Captain Grant contrived to extricate himself very ingeniously by arguing that the action which broke the spell was not walking round the body, but stepping over it, and that he had been careful to avoid.

After sundry odd ceremonies have been performed over the dead body of the lion, the flesh, which is by that time half putrid, is boiled by the sultan in person, the fat is skimmed off, and preserved as a valued medicine, and the skin dressed for regal wear.

The Wanyamuezi have a way of "making brotherhood," similar to that which has already been described, except that instead of drinking each other's blood, the newly-made brothers mix it with butter on a leaf and exchange leaves. The butter is then rubbed into the incisions, so that it acts as a healing ointment at the same time that the blood is exchanged. The ceremony is concluded by tearing the leaves to pieces and showering the fragments on the heads of the brothers.

The travellers happened to be in the country just in time to see a curious mourning ceremony. There was a tremendous commotion in the chief's "tembe," and on inquiry

it turned out that twins had been borne to one of his wives, but that they were both dead. All the women belonging to his household marched about in procession, painted and adorned in a very grotesque manner, singing and dancing with strange gesticulations of arms and legs, and looking, indeed, as if they had been indulging in pombé rather than afflicted by grief. This went on all day, and in the evening they collected a great bundle of bulrushes, tied it up in a cloth, and carried it to the door of the mother's hut, just as if it had been the dead body of a man. They then set it down on the ground, stuck a quantity of the rushes into the earth, at each side of the door, knelt down, and began a long shrieking wail, which lasted for several hours together.



TUFTED BOW AND SPEAR.

(Lent by Mr. Warham.)

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

KARAGUE.

LOCALITY OF KARAGUE—THE DISTINCT CLASSES OF THE INHABITANTS—THEIR GENERAL CHARACTER—MODE OF SALUTATION—THE RULING CASTE, OR WAHUMA, AND THE ROYAL CASTE, OR MOHERNDA—LAW OF SUCCESSION—THE SULTAN RUMANIKA AND HIS FAMILY—PLANTAIN WINE—HOW RUMANIKA GAINED THE THRONE—OBSEQUIES OF HIS FATHER—NEW-MOON CEREMONIES—TWO ROYAL PROPHETS—THE MAGIC HORNS—MARRIAGE—EASY LOT OF THE WAHUMA WOMEN—WIFE-PATTENING—AN ODD USE OF OBESITY—DRESS OF THE WOMEN—MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS—RUMANIKA'S PRIVATE BAND—FUNERAL CUSTOMS.

PASSING by a number of tribes of more or less importance, we come to the country called KARAGUE (pronounced Kah-rah-góo-eh), which occupies a district about lat. 3° S. and long. 31° E. The people of this district are divided into two distinct classes,—namely, the reigning race, or Wahuma, and the peasantry, or Wanyambo. These latter were the original inhabitants of the land, but were dispossessed by the Wahuma, who have turned them into slaves and tillers of the ground. Among the Wahuma there is another distinction,—namely, a royal caste, or Moheenda.

As to the Wanyambo, although they are reduced to the condition of peasants, and have been compared to the ryots of India, they seem to preserve their self-respect, and have a kind of government among themselves, the country being divided into districts, each of which has its own governor. These men are called Wakunga, and are distinguished by a sort of uniform, consisting of a sheet of calico or a scarlet blanket in addition to the ordinary dress.

They are an excitable and rather quarrelsome people, and are quite capable of taking their own parts, even against the Weezees, with whom they occasionally quarrel. They do not carry their weapons continually, like the Wagogo and the Weezees, contenting themselves with a stick about five feet long, with a knob at the end, without which they are seldom to be seen, and which is not only used as a weapon, but is employed in greeting a friend.

The mode of saluting another is to hold out the stick to the friend, who touches the knobbed end with his hand, and repeats a few words of salutation. Yet, although they do not habitually carry weapons, they are very well armed, their bows being exceedingly powerful and elastic, more than six feet in length, and projecting a spear-headed arrow to a great distance. Spears are also employed, but the familiar weapon is the bow.

A bow belonging to M'nanagee, the brother of Rumanika, the then head chief or "sultan" of Karague, was a beautiful specimen of native workmanship. It was six feet three inches in length, i.e. exactly the height of the owner, and was so carefully made that there was not a curve in it that could offend the eye. The string was twisted from the sinews of a cow, and the owner could project an arrow some two hundred yards. The wood of which it was made looked very like our own ash.

The Wanyambo were very polite to Captain Grant, taking great care of him, and advising him how to preserve his health, thus affording a practical refutation of the alarming stories respecting their treachery and ferocity of which he had been told when determining to pass through their country. The Wanyambo are obliged to furnish provisions to travellers free of charge, but, although they obey the letter of the law, they always expect a present of brass wire in lieu of payment. They are slenderly built, very dark in complexion, and grease themselves abundantly. They do not, however, possess such an evil odour as other grease-using tribes, as, after they have anointed themselves, they light a fire of aromatic wood, and stand to leeward of it, so as to allow the perfumed smoke to pass over them.

The Wahuma are of much lighter complexion, and the royal caste, or Moheenda, are remarkable for their bronze-like complexions, their well-cut features, and their curiously long heads. The members of this caste are further marked by some scars under the eyes, and their teeth are neither filed nor chipped. There is rather a curious law about the succession to the throne. As with us, the king's eldest son is the acknowledged heir, but then he must have been born when his father was actually king. Consequently, the youngest of a family of brothers is sometimes the heir to the throne, his elder brothers, being born before their father was king, being ineligible for the crown.

According to Captain Speke, the Wahuma, the Gallas, and the Abyssinians are but different branches of the same people, having fought and been beaten, and retired, and so made their way westward and southward, until they settled down in the country which was then inhabited by the Wanyambo. Still, although he thinks them to have derived their source from Abyssinia, and to have spread themselves over the whole of the country on which we are now engaged, he mentions that they always accommodated themselves to the manners and customs of the natives whom they supplanted, and that the Gallas or Wahuma of Karague have different customs from the Wahuma of Unyoro.

The king or sultan of Karague, at the time when our travellers passed through the country, was Rumanika. He was the handsomest and most intelligent ruler that they met in Africa, and had nothing of the African in his appearance except that his hair was short and woolly. He was six feet two inches in height, and had a peculiarly mild and open expression of countenance. He wore a robe made of small antelope skins, and another of bark-cloth, so that he was completely covered. He never wore any head-dress, but had the usual metallic armlets and anklets, and always carried a long staff in his hand.

His four sons appear to have been worthy of their father. The oldest and youngest seem to have been peculiarly favourable specimens of their race. The eldest, named Chunderah, was twenty-five years old, and very fair, so that, but for his woolly hair and his rather thick lips, he might have been taken for a sepoy. "He affected the dandy, being more neat about his lion-skin covers and ornaments than the other brothers. He led a gay life, was always ready to lead a war party, and to preside at a dance, or wherever there was wine and women.

"From the tuft of wool left unshaven on the crown of his head to his waist he was bare, except when decorated round the muscle of the arms and neck with charmed horns, strips of otter-skin, shells, and bands of wood. The skin-covering, which in the Karague people is peculiar in shape, reaches below the knee behind, and is cut away in front. From below the calf to the ankle was a mass of iron wire, and when visiting from neighbour to neighbour, he always, like every Karague, carried in his hand a five-foot staff with a knob at the end.

"He constantly came to ask after me, bringing flowers in his hand, as he knew my fondness for them, and at night he would take Frij, my headman, into the palace, along with his 'zeze,' or guitar, to amuse his sisters with Zanzibar music. In turn, the sisters, brothers, and followers would sing Karague music, and early in the morning Master Frij and Chunderah would return rather jolly to their huts outside the palace enclosure. This shows the kindly feeling existing between us and the family of the sultan; and, although this young prince had showed me many attentions, he never once asked me for a present."

The second son, who was by a different mother, was not so agreeable. His disposition was not bad, but he was stupid and slow, and anything but handsome. The youngest of the four, named Kukoko, seemed to have become a general favourite, and was clearly the pet of his father, who never went anywhere without him. He was so mild and pleasant in his manner, that the travellers presented him with a pair of white kid gloves, and, after much trouble in coaxing them on his unaccustomed fingers, were much amused by the young man's added dignity with which he walked away.



CHUNDERAH PLAYING THE GUITAR.

Contrary to the usual African custom, Rumanika was singularly abstemious, living almost entirely upon milk, and merely sucking the juice of boiled beef, without eating the meat itself. He scarcely ever touched the plantain wine or beer, that is in such general use throughout the country, and never had been known to be intoxicated. This wine or beer is made in a very ingenious manner. A large log of wood is hollowed out so as to form a tub, and it seems essential that it should be of considerable size. One end of it is raised upon a support, and a sort of barrier or dam of dried grass is fixed across the centre.

Ripe plantains are then placed in the upper division of the tub, and mashed by the women's feet and hands until they are reduced to a pulp. The juice flows down the inclined tub, straining itself by passing through the grass barrier. When a sufficient quantity has been pressed, it is strained several times backwards and forwards, and is then passed into a clean tub for fermentation. Some burnt sorghum is then bruised and thrown into the juice to help fermentation, and the tub is then covered up and placed in the sun's rays, or kept warm by a fire. In the course of three days the brewing process is supposed to be completed, and the beer or wine is poured off into calabashes.

The amount of this wine that is drunk by the natives is really amazing, every one

carrying about with them a calabash full of it, and even the youngest children of the peasants drinking it freely. It is never bottled for preservation, and, in fact, it is in such request that scarcely a calabash full can be found within two or three days after the brewing is completed. This inordinate fondness for plantain wine makes Rumanika's abstinence the more remarkable.

But Rumanika was really a wonderful man in his way, and was not only king, but priest and prophet also. His very elevation to the throne was, according to the account given by him and his friends, entirely due to supernatural aid.

When his father, Dagara, died, he and two brothers claimed the throne. In order to settle their pretensions a small magic drum was laid before them, and he who could lift it was to take the crown. The drum was a very small one, and of scarcely any weight, but upon it were laid certain potent charms. The consequence was, that although his brothers put all their strength to the task, they could not stir the drum, while Rumanika raised it easily with his little finger. Ever afterwards he carried this drum with him on occasions of ceremony, swinging it about to show how easy it was for the rightful sovereign to wield it.

Being dissatisfied with such a test, one of the chiefs insisted on Rumanika's trial by another ordeal. He was then brought into a sacred spot, where he was required to seat himself on the ground, and await the result of the charms. If he were really the appointed king, the portion of the ground on which he was seated would rise up in the air until it reached the sky; but if he were the wrong man, it would collapse, and dash him to pieces. According to all accounts, his own included, Rumanika took his seat, was raised up into the sky, and his legitimacy acknowledged.

Altogether, his family seem to have been noted for their supernatural qualities. When his father, Dagara, died, his body was sewn up in a cow-hide, put into a canoe, and set floating on the lake, where it was allowed to decompose. Three maggots were then taken from the canoe and given in charge of Rumanika, but as soon as they came into his house one of them became a lion, another a leopard, and the third was transformed into a stick. The body was then laid on the top of a hill, a hut built over it, five girls and fifty cows put into it, and the door blocked up and watched, so that the inmates gradually died of starvation.

The lion which issued from the corpse was supposed to be an emblem of the peculiar character of the Karague country, which is supposed to be guarded by lions from the attack of other tribes. It was said that whenever Dagara heard that the enemy was marching into his country, he used to call the lions together, send them against the advancing force, and so defeat them by deputy.

In his character of high-priest, Rumanika was very imposing, especially in his new-moon levee, which took place every month, for the purpose of ascertaining the loyalty of his subjects.

On the evening of the new moon he clothes himself in his priestly garb, *i.e.* a quantity of feathers nodding over his forehead, and fastened with a kind of strap of beads. A huge white beard covers his chin and descends to his breast, and is fastened to his face by a belt of beads. Having thus prepared himself, he sits behind a screen, and waits for the ceremony to begin.

This is a very curious one. Thirty or forty long drums are ranged on the ground, just like a battery of so many mortars; on their heads a white cross is painted. The drummers stand behind them, each with a pair of sticks, and in front is their leader, who has a pair of small drums slung to his neck.

The leader first raises his right arm, and then his left, the performers imitating him with exact precision. He then brings down both sticks on the drums with a rapid roll, which becomes louder and louder, until the noise is scarcely endurable. This is continued at intervals for several hours, interspersed with performances on smaller drums, and other musical instruments. The various chiefs and officers next advance in succession, leaping and gesticulating, shouting expressions of devotion to their sovereign, and invoking his vengeance on them should they ever fail in their loyalty. As they finish their salutation they kneel successively before the king, and hold out their knobbed sticks that he may

touch them, and then retire to make room for their successors in the ceremony. In order to give added force to the whole proceeding, a horn is stuffed full of magic powder, and placed in the centre, with its opening directed towards the quarter from which danger is to be feared.

A younger brother of Rumanika, named M'nanagee, was even a greater prophet and diviner than his royal brother, and was greatly respected by the Wahuma in consequence of his supernatural powers. He had a sacred stone on a hill, and might be seen daily walking to the spot for the purpose of divination. He had also a number of elephant tusks which he had stuffed with magic powder and placed in the enclosure, for the purpose of a kind of religious worship.

M'nanagee was a tall and stately personage, skilled in the knowledge of plants, and, strange to say, ready to impart his knowledge. As insignia of his priestly office, he wore an abundance of charms. One charm was fastened to the back of his shaven head, others hung from his neck and arms, while some were tied to his knees, and even the end of his walking-stick contained a charm. He was always attended by his page, a little fat boy, who carried his fly-flapper, and his master's pipe, the latter being of considerable length, and having a bowl of enormous size.

He had a full belief in the power of his magic horns, and consulted them on almost every occasion of life. If any one were ill, he asked their opinion as to the nature of the malady and the best remedy for it. If he felt curious about a friend at a distance, the magic horns gave him tidings of the absent one. If an attack were intended on the country, the horns gave him warning of it, and, when rightly invoked, they either averted the threatened attack, or gave victory over their enemies.

The people have an implicit faith in the power of their charms, and believe that they not only inspire courage, but render the person invulnerable. Rumanika's head magician, K'yeugo, told Captain Speke that the Watuta tribes had invested his village for six months; and when all the cattle and other provisions were eaten, they took the village and killed all the inhabitants except himself. Him they could not kill on account of the power of his charms, and, although they struck at him with their spears as he lay on the ground, they could not even wound him.

The Wahuma believe in the constant presence of departed souls, and that they can exercise an influence for good or evil over those whom they had known in life. So, if a field happens to be blighted, or the crop does not look favourable, a gourd is laid on the path. All passengers who see the gourd know its meaning, and set up a wailing cry to the spirits to give a good crop to their surviving friends.

In order to propitiate the spirit of his father, Dagara, Rumanika used annually to sacrifice a cow on his tomb, and was accustomed to lay corn and beer near the grave, as offerings to his father's spirit.

In Karague, marriage is little more than a species of barter, the father receiving cows, sheep, slaves, and other property for his daughter. But the transaction is not a final one, for if the bride does not happen to approve of her husband, she can return the marriage gifts and return to her father. There is but little ceremony in their marriages, the principal one seeming to consist of tying up the bride in a blackened skin, and carrying her in noisy procession to her husband.

The Wahuma women lead an easy life compared with that of the South African women, and indeed their chief object in life seems to be the attainment of corpulence. Either the Wahuma women are specially constituted, or the food which they eat is exceptionally nutritious, for they attain dimensions that are almost incredible. For example, Rumanika, though himself a slight and well-shaped man, had five wives of enormous fatness. Three of them were unable to enter the door of an ordinary hut, or to move about without being supported by a person on either side. They are fed on boiled plantains and milk, and consume vast quantities of the latter article, eating it all day long. Indeed, they are fattened as systematically as turkeys, and are "crammed" with an equal disregard of their feelings.

Captain Speke gives a very humorous account of his interview with one of the women of rank, together with the measurements which she permitted him to take:—

"After a long and amusing conversation with Rumanika in the morning, I called on one of his sisters-in-law, married to an elder brother, who was born before Dagara ascended the throne. She was another of these victims of obesity, unable to stand except on all fours. I was desirous to obtain a good view of her, and actually to measure her, and induced her to give me facilities for doing so by offering in return to show her a bit of my naked legs and arms. The bait took as I wished it, and, after getting her to sidle and wriggle into the middle of the hut, I did as I had promised, and then took her dimensions as noted.

"Round arm, one foot eleven inches. Chest, four feet four inches. Thigh, two feet seven inches. Calf, one foot eight inches. Height, five feet eight inches. All of these are exact except the height, and I believe I could have obtained this more accurately if I could have had her laid on the floor. But knowing what difficulties I should have to contend with in such a piece of engineering, I tried to get her height by raising her up. This, after infinite exertions on the part of us both, was accomplished, when she sank down again fainting, for the blood had rushed into her head.

"Meanwhile the daughter, a lass of sixteen, sat stark naked before us, sucking at a milk-pot, on which the father kept her at work by holding a rod in his hand; for, as fattening is the first duty of fashionable female life, it must be duly enforced with the rod if necessary. I got up a bit of a flirtation with missy, and induced her to rise and shake hands with me. Her features were lovely, but her body was as round as a ball."

In one part of the country, the women turned their obesity to good account. In exchanging food for beads, the usual bargain was that a certain quantity of food should be paid for by a belt of beads that would go round the waist. But the women of Karague were, on an average, twice as large round the waist as those of other districts, and the natural consequence was, that food practically rose one hundred per cent. in price.

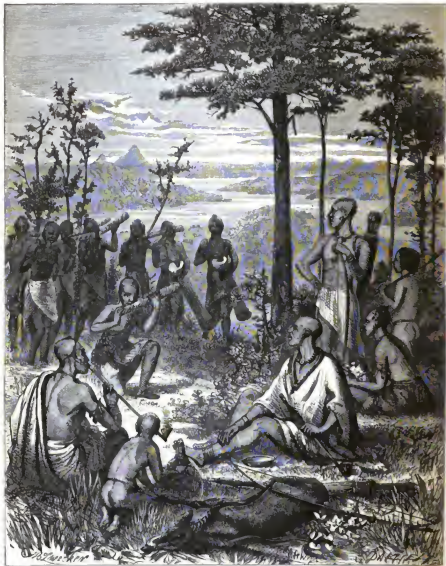
Despite their exceeding fatness, their features retain much beauty, the face being oval, and the eyes peculiarly fine and intelligent. The higher class of women are very modest, not only wearing the cow-skin petticoat, but also a large wrapper of black cloth, with which they envelope their whole bodies, merely allowing one eye to be seen. Yet up to the marriageable age no clothing of any kind is worn by either sex, and both boys and girls will come up to the traveller and talk familiarly with him, as unconscious of nudity as their first parents. Until they are married they allow the hair to grow, and then shave it off, sometimes entirely, and sometimes partially. They have an odd habit of making caps of cane, which they cover on the outside with the woolly hair shaved off their own heads.

Mention has been made of various musical instruments used in Karague. The most important are the drums, which vary in size as much as they do in England. That which corresponds to our side-drum is about four feet in length and one in width, and is covered at the wide end with an ichneumon skin. This instrument is slung from the shoulder, and is played with the fingers like the Indian "tom-tom." The large drums used at the new-moon levee are of similar structure, but very much larger. The war drum is beaten by the women, and at its sound the men rush to arms and repair to the several quarters.

There are also several stringed instruments employed in Karague. The principal of these is the nanga, a kind of guitar, which, according to Captain Grant, may be called the national instrument. There are several varieties of the nanga. "In one of these, played by an old woman, six of the seven notes were a perfect scale, the seventh being the only faulty string. In another, played by a man, three strings were a full harmonious chord. These facts show that the people are capable of cultivation. The nanga was formed of heavy dark wood, the shape of a tray, twenty-two by nine inches, or thirty by eight, with three crosses in the bottom, and laced with one string seven or eight times over bridges at either end. Sometimes a gourd or sounding-board was tied on to the back.

"Prince M'nanagee, at my request, sent the best player he knew. The man boldly entered without introduction, dressed in the usual Wanyambo costume, and looked a wild, excited creature. After resting his spear against the roof of the hut, he took a nanga

from under his arm, and commenced. As he sat upon a mat with his head averted, he sang something of his having been sent to me, and of the favourite dog Keeromba. The



KUMANIKA'S PRIVATE BAND

wild yet gentle music and words attracted a crowd of admirers, who sang the dog-song for days afterwards, as we had it encored several times.

"Another player was an old woman, calling herself Keeleamyagga. As she played while standing in front of me, all the song she could produce was 'sh! sh!' screwing her mouth, rolling her body, and raising her feet from the ground. It was a miserable performance, and not repeated."

There is another stringed instrument called the "zcze." It differs from the nanga in having only one string, and, like the nanga, is used to accompany the voice in singing. Their wind instruments may be called the flageolet and the bugle. The former has six finger-holes; and as the people walk along with a load on their heads, they play the flageolet to lighten their journey, and really contrive to produce sweet and musical tones from it. The so-called "bugle" is made of several pieces of gourd, fitting into one another in telescope fashion, and is covered with cow-skin. The notes of a common chord can be produced on the bugle, the thumb acting as a key. It is about one foot in length.

Rumanika had a special military band comprised of sixteen men, fourteen of whom had bugles and the other two carried hand-drums. They formed in three ranks, the drummers being in the rear, and played on the march, swaying their bodies in time to the music, and the leader advancing with a curiously active step, in which he touched the ground with each knee alternately.

The code of laws in Karague is rather severe in some cases, and strangely mild in others. For example, theft is punished with the stocks, in which the offender is sometimes kept for many months. Assault with a stick entails a fine of ten goats, but if with a deadly weapon, the whole of the property is forfeited, the injured party taking one half, and the sultan the other. In cases of actual murder, the culprit is executed, and his entire property goes to the relations of the murdered man. The most curious law is that against adultery. Should the offender be an ordinary wife, the loss of an ear is thought to be sufficient penalty; but if she be a slave, or the daughter of the sultan, both parties are liable to capital punishment.

When an inhabitant of Karague dies, his body is disposed of according to his rank. Should he be one of the peasants, or Wanyambo, the body is sunk in the water; but if he should belong to the higher caste, or Wahuma, the corpse is buried on an island in the lake, all such islands being considered as sacred ground. Near the spot whereon one of the Wahuma has died, the relations place a symbolical mark, consisting of two sticks tied to a stone, and laid across the pathway. The symbol informs the passenger that the pathway is for the present sacred, and in consequence he turns aside, and makes a *détour* before he resumes the pathway. The singular funeral of the sultan has already been mentioned.

THE WAZARAMO AND WASAGARA.

BEFORE proceeding to other African countries, it will be as well to give a few lines to two other tribes, namely,—the Wazaramo and the Wasagara.

The country in which the former people live is called Uzaramo, and is situated immediately southward of Zanzibar, being the first district through which Captains Speke and Grant passed.

The country is covered with villages, the houses of which are partly conical after the ordinary African fashion, and partly gable-ended, according to the architecture of the coast, the latter form being probably due to the many traders who come from different parts of the world. The walls of the houses are "wattle and daub," i.e. hurdle-work plastered with clay, and the roofs are thatched with grass or reeds. Over these villages are set head-men, called Phanzes, who ordinarily call themselves subjects of Said Majid, the Sultan of Zanzibar. But as soon as a caravan passes through their country, each head

man considers himself as a sultan in his own right, and levies tolls from the travellers. They never allow strangers to come into their villages, differing in this respect from other tribes, who use their towns as traps, into which the unwary traveller is induced to come, and from which he does not escape without suffering severely in purse.

The people, although rather short and thick-set, are good-looking, and very fond of dress, although their costume is but limited, consisting only of a cloth tied round the waist. They are very fond of ornaments, such as shells, pieces of tin, and beads, and rub their bodies with red clay and oil until they look as if they were new cast in copper. Their hair is woolly, and twisted into numerous tufts, each of which is elongated by bark fibres. The men are very attentive to the women, dressing their hair for them, or escorting them to the water, lest any harm should befall them.



HAIR-DRESSING.

A wise traveller passes through Uzaramo as fast as he can, the natives never furnishing guides, nor giving the least assistance, but being always ready to pounce on him should he be weak, and to rob him by open violence, instead of employing the more refined "hongo" system. They seem to be a boisterous race, but are manageable by mixed gentleness and determination. Even when they had drawn out their warriors in battle array, and demanded in a menacing manner a larger hongo than they ought to expect, Captain Speke found that gentle words would always cause them to withdraw, and leave the matter to peaceful arbitration. Should they come to blows, they are rather formidable enemies, being well armed with spears and bows and arrows, the latter being poisoned, and their weapons being always kept in the same state of polish and neatness as their owners.

Some of these Phanzes are apt to be very troublesome to the traveller, almost always demanding more than they expect to get, and generally using threats as the simplest means of extortion. One of them, named Khombé la Simba, or Lion's-claw, was very troublesome, sending back contemptuously the present that had been given him, and threatening the direst vengeance if his demands were not complied with. Five miles further inland, another Phanze, named Mnkia ya Nyani, or Monkey's-tail, demanded another hongo; but, as the stores of the expedition would have been soon exhausted at

this rate, Captain Speke put an abrupt stop to this extortion, giving the chiefs the option of taking what he chose to give them, or fighting for it; and, as he took care to display his armory and the marksmanship of his men, they thought it better to comply rather than fight and get nothing.

Owing to the rapidity with which the travellers passed through this inhospitable land, and the necessity for avoiding the natives as much as possible, very little was learned of their manners and customs. The Wazaramo would flock round the caravan for the purpose of barter, and to inspect the strangers, but their ordinary life was spent in their villages, which, as has been already mentioned, are never entered by travellers. Nothing is known of their religion, though it is possible that the many Mahometans who pass through their land may have introduced some traces of their own religion, just as is the case in Londa, where the religion is an odd mixture of idolatrous, Mahometan, and Christian rites, with the meaning ingeniously excluded. In fact they do not want to know the meaning of the rites, leaving that to the priests, and being perfectly contented so long as the witch-doctor performs his part. That the Wazaramo have at all events a certain amount of superstition, is evident from the fact that they erect little model huts as temples to the Spirit of Rain. Such a hut or temple is called M'ganga. They also lay broken articles on graves, and occasionally carve rude wooden dolls and fix them in the ground at the end of the grave; but, as far as is known, they have no separate burying-place.

THE WASAGARA.

THE second of these tribes, the WASAGARA, inhabits a large tract of country, full a hundred miles in length, and is composed of a great number of inferior or sub-tribes. Like other African nations, who at one time were evidently great and powerful, the Wasagara have become feeble and comparatively insignificant, though still numerous. Being much persecuted by armed parties from the coast, who attack and carry them off for slaves, besides stealing what property they have, the Wasagara have mostly taken to the lofty conical mountains that form such conspicuous objects in their country, and there are tolerably safe. But, as they are thus obliged to reside in such limited districts, they can do but little in agriculture, and they are afraid to descend to the level ground in order to take part in the system of commerce, which is so largely developed in this country. Their villages are mostly built on the hill-spurs, and they cultivate, as far as they can, the fertile lands which lie between them. But the continual inroads of inimical tribes, as well as those of the slave-dealers, prevent the inhabitants from tilling more land than can just supply their wants.

So utterly dispirited are they, that as soon as a caravan is seen by a sentry, warning is given, and all the population flock to the hill-top, where they scatter and hide themselves so completely that no slaving party would waste its time by trying to catch them. Resistance is never even thought of, and it is hardly possible to induce the Wasagara to descend the hills until the caravan has passed. Consequently it is scarcely possible to obtain a Msagara as a guide through his country. If, however, the traveller does succeed in so doing, he finds that the man is trustworthy, lively, active, and altogether an amusing companion. The men seem to be good hunters, displaying great skill in discovering and tracking game.

Owing to the precarious nature of their lives, the Wasagara have but little dress, a small strip of cloth round the waist being the ordinary costume.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE WATUSI AND WAGANDA.

LOCALITY OF THE WATUSI TRIBE—MODE OF DRESS—A WATUSI WOMAN—THEIR VALUE AS HERDS-
MEN—SALUTATION—WATUSI DANCING—THE WAGANDA—ROAD SYSTEM OF UGANDA—CODE OF
ETIQUETTE—DISREGARD OF HUMAN LIFE—CRUELTY—THE WIFE-WHIP—AN AFRICAN BLUE-
BEARD—LIFE IN THE PALACE—REVIEWING THE TROOPS—ORIGIN OF THE WAGANDA TRIBE—
KIMERA, AND HIS MODE OF GOVERNMENT—SYSTEM OF ORGANIZATION—THE LAW OF SUCCESSION
—M'TESA, THE PRESENT KING, AND HIS COURT—THE ROYAL PALACE—GENERAL ARCHITECTURE
OF THE WAGANDA—RECEPTION OF A GUEST—THE ROYAL WALK—A COUNCIL—SUPERSTITIONS—
THE WATER-SPIRIT AND HIS HIGH-PRIEST—RELIGION OF THE WAGANDA—HUMAN SACRIFICES—
THE SLAVE-TRADE—BURYING-GROUNDS OF THE WAGANDA.

THERE is one tribe which, though small, has sufficient individuality to deserve a brief notice. The WATUSI are a race of herdsmen, who live on either side of the equator, and, according to Captain Grant, resemble the Somalis in general appearance. They generally take service in the households of wealthy persons, and devote themselves almost entirely to the care of the cattle.

They have plentiful and woolly hair, and the men shave their beards with the exception of a crescent-shaped patch. They have an odd fashion of staining their gums black, using for the purpose a mixture of the tamarind seed calcined and powdered, and then mixed with a salt of copper. The men carry their weapons when walking, and seldom appear without a bow and arrows, a five-foot long stick with a knob at one end, and a pipe.

When they meet a friend, they hold out the knobbed end of the stick to him; he touches it, and the demands of etiquette are supposed to be fulfilled. This knobbed stick is quite an institution among the tribes that have recently been mentioned, and a man seems to be quite unhappy unless he has in his hand one of these curious implements. They are fond of ornament, and wear multitudinous rings upon their wrists and ankles, the latter being generally of iron and the former of brass.

They are a fine-looking race, and the women are equally remarkable in this respect with the men,—a phenomenon rarely seen in this part of the world. They are tall, erect, and well-featured, and, as a rule, are decently clad in dressed cow-skins. The general appearance of the Watusi women can be gathered from Captain Grant's description.

"One morning, to my surprise, in a wild jungle we came upon cattle, then upon a 'bomah' or ring fence, concealed by beautiful umbrageous large trees, quite the place for a gipsy camp. At the entry two strapping fellows met me and invited my approach. I mingled with the people, got water from them, and was asked, 'Would I prefer some milk?' This sounded to me more civilized than I expected from Africans, so I followed the men, who led me up to a beautiful lady-like creature, a Watusi woman, sitting alone under a tree.

"She received me without any expression of surprise, in the most dignified manner; and, after talking with the men, rose smiling, showing great gentleness in her manner, and led me to her hut. I had time to scrutinise the interesting stranger: she wore the usual Watusi costume of a cow's skin reversed, teased into a fringe with a needle, coloured brown, and wrapped round her body from below the chest to the ankles. Lappets, showing zebra-like stripes of many colours, she wore as a 'turn-over' round the waist, and, except where ornamented on one arm with a highly polished coil of thick brass wire, two equally bright and massive rings on the right wrist, and a neck pendant of brass wire,—except these, and her becoming wrapper—she was *au naturel*.

"I was struck with her peculiarly-formed head and graceful long neck; the beauty of her fine eyes, month, and nose; the smallness of her hands and naked feet—all were faultless; the only bad feature, which is considered one of beauty with them, was her large ears. The arms and elbows were rounded off like an egg, the shoulders were sloping, and her small breasts were those of a crouching Venus—a perfect beauty, though darker than a brunette.

"Her temporary residence was peculiar; it was formed of grass, was flat-roofed, and so low that I could not stand upright in it. The fireplace consisted of three stones; milk vessels of wood, shining white from scouring, were ranged on one side of the abode. A good-looking woman sat rocking a gourd between her knees in the process of churning butter. After the fair one had examined my skin and my clothes, I expressed great regret that I had no beads to present to her. 'They are not wanted,' she said; 'sit down, drink this buttermilk, and here is also some butter for you.' It was placed on a clean leaf. I shook hands, patted her cheek, and took my leave, but some beads were sent her, and she paid me a visit, bringing butter and buttermilk, and asking for more presents, which she of course got, and I had the gratification to see her eyes sparkle at the sight of them.

"This was one of the few women I met during our whole journey that I admired. None of the belles in Usui could approach her; but they were of a different caste, though dressing much in the same style. When cow's skins were not worn, these Usui women dressed very tidily in bark cloths, and had no marks or cuttings observable on their bodies. Circles of hair were often shaved off the crowns of their heads, and their neck ornaments showed considerable taste in the selection of the beads. The most becoming were a string of the M'izama spheres of marble-sized white porcelain, and triangular pieces of shell rounded at the corners.

"An erect fair girl, daughter of a chief, paid us a visit, accompanied by six maids, and sat silently for half an hour. She had a spiral circle of wool shaved off the crown of her head; her only ornament was a necklace of green beads; she wore the usual wrapper, and across her shoulders a strip of scarlet cloth was thrown; her other fineries were probably left at home. The women of the district generally had grace and gentleness in their manner."

Some of the women tattoo themselves on the shoulders and breasts in rather a curious fashion, producing a pattern that looks in front like point lace, and which then passes over the shoulders and comes on the back down to the waist, like a pair of braces. A band of similar markings runs round the waist.

The wages of the Watusi tribe for the management of the cattle are simple enough. Half the milk is theirs, and as a cow in these regions is singularly deficient in milk, producing a bare pint per diem, the herdsmen have but small reward for their labour. They are very clever at managing the animals placed under their control. If they have to drive an unruly cow, they simply tie a cord to the hock of one of the hind legs, and walk behind it holding the end of the cord. This very simple process has the effect of subduing the cow, who yields as if to a charm, and walks quietly in whatever direction she is told to go. Goats are led by taking up one of the fore legs in the hand, when it is found that the animal walks along quietly on three legs; the temporary deprivation of the fourth limb being no particular impediment. Perhaps on account of this mastery over the cattle, even the Wanyamuezi look upon the Watusi with great respect. Should members of those tribes meet, the Weeze presses the palms of his hands together, and

the Watusi gently clasps them in his own, muttering at the same time a few words in a low tone of voice. If a Watusi man meets a woman of the same tribe, she allows her arms to fall by her side, and he gently presses her arms below the shoulders.

They are an industrious people, and make baskets with considerable skill, using a sharp-pointed spear, and doing nearly as much of the work with their feet as with their hands. They also work in metals, and have a kind of bellows made of wood, with cane handles,—very small, but efficient enough for the purpose. The dances with which the Watusi amuse themselves in the evening are as simple and peaceful as the dancers, and



SALUTATION.

women take equal part with the men in them. They array themselves in a circle, singing, and clapping hands in time. Presently a woman passes into the ring, dances alone, and then, making a graceful obeisance to some favourite in the ring, she retires backwards to her place. A young man then comes forward, goes through a number of evolutions, bows to one of the girls, and then makes way for a successor.

Captain Grant always speaks in the highest terms of the Watusi, whom he designates as his favourite race. He states that they never will permit themselves to be sold into slavery, but prefer death to such dishonour. This people are always distinguishable by their intelligence and the easy politeness of their manners. They are also remarkable for their neatness and personal cleanliness, in which they present a strong contrast to the neighbouring tribes.

THE WAGANDA TRIBE.

PASSING still northwards, and keeping to the westward of the Victoria N'yanza, we come to the UGANDA district, the inhabitants of which are named WAGANDA.

This country is situated on the equator, and is a much more pleasant land than might be supposed from its geographical position, being fertile, and covered with vegetation. It is a peculiarly pleasant land for a traveller, as it is covered with roads, which are not only broad and firm, but are cut almost in a straight line from one point to another. Uganda seems to be unique in the matter of roads, the like of which are not to be found in any part of Africa, except those districts which are held by Europeans. The roads are wide enough for carriages, but far too steep in places for any wheeled conveyance; but as the Waganda do not use carriages of any kind, the roads are amply sufficient for their purposes. The Waganda have even built bridges across swamps and rivers, but their knowledge of engineering has not enabled them to build a bridge that would not decay in a few years.

Like many other tribes which bear, but do not deserve, the name of savages, the Waganda possess a curiously strict code of etiquette, which is so stringent on some points that an offender against it is likely to lose his life, and is sure to incur a severe penalty.

If, for example, a man appears before the king with his dress tied carelessly, or if he makes a mistake in the mode of saluting, or if, in squatting before his sovereign, he allows the least portion of his limbs to be visible, he is led off to instant execution. As the fatal sign is given, the victim is seized by the royal pages, who wear a rope turban round their heads, and at the same moment all the drums and other instruments strike up, to drown his cries for mercy. He is rapidly bound with the ropes snatched hastily from the heads of the pages, dragged off, and put to death, no one daring to take the least notice while the tragedy is being enacted.

They have also a code of sumptuary laws which is enforced with the greatest severity. The skin of the serval, a kind of leopard cat, for example, may only be worn by those of royal descent. Once Captain Speke was visited by a very agreeable young man, who evidently intended to strike awe into the white man, and wore round his neck the serval-skin emblem of royal birth. The attempted deception, however, recoiled upon its author, who suffered the fate of the daw with borrowed plumes. An officer of rank detected the imposture, had the young man seized, and challenged him to show proofs of his right to wear the emblem of royalty. As he failed to do so, he was threatened with being brought before the king, and so compounded with the chief for a fine of a hundred cows.

Heavy as the penalty was, the young man showed his wisdom by acceding to it; for if he had been brought before the king, he would assuredly have lost his life, and probably have been slowly tortured to death. One punishment to which M'tesa, the king of Uganda, seems to have been rather partial, was the gradual dismemberment of the criminal for the sake of feeding his pet vultures; and although on some occasions he orders them to be killed before they are dismembered, he sometimes omits that precaution, and the wretched beings are slowly cut to pieces with grass blades, as it is against etiquette to use knives for this purpose.

The king alone has the privilege of wearing a cock's-comb of hair on the top of his head, the remainder being shaved off. This privilege is sometimes extended to a favourite queen or two, so that actual royalty may be at once recognised.

Even the mode of sitting is carefully regulated. Only the king is allowed to sit on a chair, all his subjects being forced to place themselves on the ground. When Captains

Speke and Grant visited Uganda, there was a constant struggle on this point, the travellers insisting on sitting in their arm-chairs, and the king wanting them to sit on the ground. On one occasion, when walking with M'tesa and his suite, a halt was ordered, and Captain Speke looked about for something to sit upon. The king, seeing this, and being determined not to be outdone, called a page, made him kneel on all fours, and then sat on his back. The controversy at last ended in a compromise, the travellers abandoning their chairs in the king's presence, but sitting on bundles of grass which were quite as high.

When an inferior presents any article to his superior, he always pats and rubs it with his hands, and then strokes with it each side of his face. This is done in order to show that no witchcraft has been practised with it, as in such a case the intended evil would recoil on the donor. This ceremony is well enough when employed with articles of use or apparel; but when meat, plantains, or other articles of food are rubbed with the dirty hands and well-greased face of the donor, the recipient, if he should happen to be a white man, would be only too happy to dispense with the ceremony, and run his risk of witchcraft.

The officers of the court are required to shave off all their hair except a single cockade at the back of the head, while the pages are distinguished by two cockades, one over each temple, so that, even if they happen to be without their rope turbans, their rank and authority are at once indicated. When the king sends the pages on a message, a most picturesque sight is presented. All the commands of the king have to be done at full speed, and when ten or a dozen pages start off in a body, their dresses streaming in the air behind them, each striving to outrun the other, they look at a distance like a flight of birds rather than human beings.

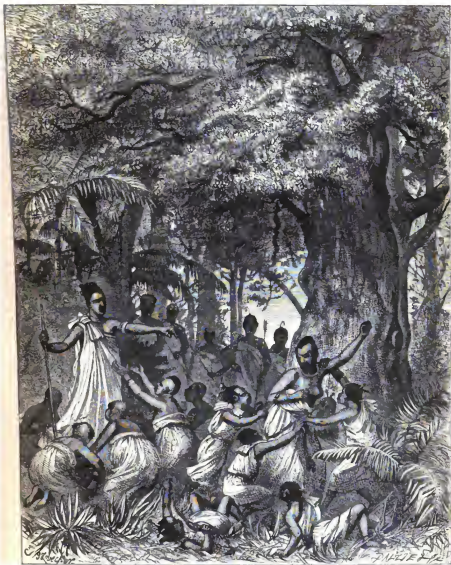
Here, as in many other countries, human life, that of the king excepted, is not of the least value. On one occasion Captain Speke had given M'tesa a new rifle, with which he was much pleased. After examining it for some time, he loaded it, handed it to one of his pages, and told him to go and shoot somebody in the outer court. The page, a mere boy, took the rifle, went into the court, and in a moment the report of the rifle showed that the king's orders had been obeyed. The urchin came back grinning with delight at the feat which he had achieved, just like a schoolboy who has shot his first sparrow, and handed back the rifle to his master. As to the unfortunate man who was fated to be the target, nothing was heard about him, the murder of a man being far too common an incident to attract notice.

On one occasion, when M'tesa and his wives were on a pleasure excursion, one of the favourites, a singularly good-looking woman, plucked a fruit, and offered it to the king, evidently intending to please him. Instead of taking it as intended, he flew into a violent passion, declared that it was the first time that a woman had ever dared to offer him anything, and ordered the pages to lead her off to execution. "These words were no sooner uttered by the king than the whole bevy of pages slipped their cord turbans from their heads, and rushed like a pack of Cupid beagles upon the fairy queen, who, indignant at the little urchins daring to touch her majesty, remonstrated with the king, and tried to beat them off like flies, but was soon captured, overcome, and dragged away, crying in the names of the Kamraviona and M'zungu (myself [*i.e.* Captain Speke]) for help and protection, whilst Lubuga, the pet sister, and all the other women clasped the king by his legs, and, kneeling, implored forgiveness for their sister. The more they craved for mercy, the more brutal he became, till at last he took a heavy stick and began to belabour the poor victim on the head.

"Hitherto I had been extremely careful not to interfere with any of the king's acts of arbitrary cruelty, knowing that such interference at an early stage would produce more harm than good. This last act of barbarism, however, was too much for my English blood to stand; and as I heard my name, M'zungu, imploringly pronounced, I rushed at the king, and, staying his uplifted arm, demanded from him the woman's life. Of course I ran imminent risk of losing my own in thus thwarting the capricious tyrant, but his caprice proved the friend of both. The novelty of interference made him smile, and the woman was instantly released."

On another occasion, when M'tesa had been out shooting, Captain Grant asked what

port he had enjoyed. The unexpected answer was that game had been very scarce, but that he had shot a good many men instead. Beside the pages who have been mentioned,



ARREST OF THE QUEEN.

there were several executioners, who were pleasant and agreeable men in private life, and held in great respect by the people. They were supposed to be in command of the pages

who bound with their rope turbans the unfortunates who were to suffer, and mostly inflicted the punishment itself.

This particular king seems to have been rather exceptionally cruel, his very wives being subject to the same capriciousness of temper as the rest of his subjects. Of course he beat them occasionally, but as wife-beating is the ordinary custom in Uganda, he was only following the ordinary habits of the people.

There is a peculiar whip made for the special purpose of beating wives. It is formed of a long strip of hippopotamus hide, split down the middle to within three or four inches of the end. The entire end is beaten and scraped until it is reduced in size to the proper dimensions of a handle. The two remaining thongs are suffered to remain square, but are twisted in a screw-like fashion, so as to present sharp edges throughout their whole length. When dry, this whip is nearly as hard as iron, and scarcely less heavy, so that at every blow the sharp edges cut deeply into the flesh.

Wife-flogging, however, was not all; he was in the habit of killing his wives and their attendants without the least remorse. While Captain Speke was residing within the limits of the palace, there was scarcely a day when some woman was not led to execution, and some days three or four were murdered. Mostly they were female attendants of the queens, but frequently the royal pages dragged out a woman whose single cockade on the top of her head announced her as one of the king's wives.

M'tesa, in fact, was a complete African Bluebeard, continually marrying and killing, the brides, however, exceeding the victims in number. Royal marriage is a very simple business in Uganda. Parents who have offended their king and want to pacify him, or who desire to be looked on favourably by him, bring their daughters and offer them as he sits at the door of his house. As is the case with all his female attendants, they are totally unclothed, and stand before the king in ignorance of their future. If he accept them, he makes them sit down, seats himself on their knees, and embraces them. This is the whole of the ceremony, and as each girl is thus accepted, the happy parents perform the curious salutation called "n'yanzigging," i.e. prostrating themselves on the ground, floundering about, clapping their hands, and ejaculating the word "n'yans," or thanks, as fast as they can say it.

Twenty or thirty brides will sometimes be presented to him in a single morning, and he will accept more than half of them, some of them being afterwards raised to the rank of wives, while the others are relegated to the position of attendants. It was rather remarkable, that although the principal queen was most liberal with these attendants, offering plenty of them to Captain Speke and his companions, not one of them would have been permitted to marry a native, as she might have betrayed the secrets of the palace.

Life in the palace may be honourable enough, but seems to be anything but agreeable, except to the king. The whole of the court are abject slaves, and at the mercy of any momentary caprice of the merciless, thoughtless, irresponsible despot. Whatever wish may happen to enter the king's head must be executed at once, or woe to the delinquent who fails to carry it out. Restless and captious as a spoilt child, he never seemed to know exactly what he wanted, and would issue simultaneously the most contradictory orders, and then expect them to be obeyed.

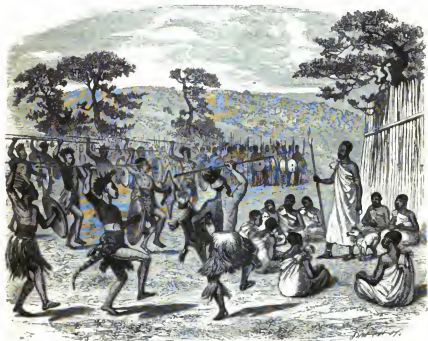
As for the men who held the honourable post of his guards, they were treated something worse than dogs—far worse indeed than M'tesa treated his own dog. They might lodge themselves as they could, and were simply fed by throwing great lumps of beef and plantains among them. For this they scramble just like so many dogs, scratching and tearing the morsels from each other, and trying to devour as much as possible within a given number of seconds.

The soldiers of M'tesa were much better off than his guards, although their position was not so honourable.

They are well dressed, and their rank is distinguished by a sort of uniform, the officers of royal birth wearing the leopard-skin tippet, while those of inferior rank are distinguished by coloured cloths, and skin cloaks made of the hide of oxen or antelopes. Each carries two spears, and an oddly-formed shield, originally oval, but cut into deep scallops,

and having at every point a pendent tuft of hair. Their heads are decorated in a most curious manner, some of the men wearing a crescent-like ornament, and some tying round their heads wreaths made of different materials, to which a horn, a bunch of beads, a dried lizard, or some such ornament, is appended.

Not deficient in personal courage, their spirits were cheered in combat by the certainty of reward or punishment. Should they behave themselves bravely, treasures would be heaped upon them, and they would receive from their royal master plenty of cattle and wives. But if they behaved badly, the punishment was equally certain and most terrible. A recreant soldier was not only put to death, but holes bored in his body with red-hot irons until he died from sheer pain and exhaustion.



REVIEW.

Now and then the king held a review, in which the valiant and the cowards obtained their fitting rewards. These reviews offered most picturesque scenes. "Before us was a large open sward, with the huts of the queen's Kamraviona or commander-in-chief beyond. The battalion, consisting of what might be termed three companies, each containing two hundred men, being drawn up on the left extremity of the parade-ground, received orders to march past in single file from the right of companies at a long trot, and re-form again at the end of the square.

"Nothing conceivable could be more wild or fantastic than the sight which ensued; the men all nearly naked, with goat or cat skins depending from their girdles, and smeared with war-colours according to the taste of the individual; one half of the body red or black, the other blue, not in regular order; as, for instance, one stocking would be red, and

the other black, whilst the breeches above would be the opposite colours, and so with the sleeves and waistcoat.

"Every man carried the same arms, two spears and one shield, held as if approaching an enemy, and they thus moved in three lines of single rank and file, at fifteen or twenty paces asunder, with the same high action and elongated step, the ground leg only being bent, to give their strides the greater force.

"After the men had all started, the captains of companies followed, even more fantastically dressed; and last of all came the great Colonel Congow, a perfect Robinson Crusoe, with his long white-haired goat-skins, a fiddle-shaped leather shield, tufted with hair at all six extremities, bands of long hair tied below the knees, and a magnificent helmet covered with rich beads of every colour in excellent taste, surmounted with a plume of crimson feathers, in the centre of which rose a bent stem tufted with goat's hair. Next, they charged in companies to and fro, and finally the senior officers came charging at their king, making violent professions of faith and honesty, for which they were applauded. The parade then broke up, and all went home."

At these reviews, the king distributes rewards and metes out his punishments. The scene is equally stirring and terrible. As the various officers come before the king, they prostrate themselves on the ground, and, after going through their elaborate salutation, they deliver their reports as to the conduct of the men under their command. To some are given various presents, with which they go off rejoicing, after floundering about on the ground in the extremity of their gratitude; while others are seized by the ever-officious pages, bound, and dragged off to execution, the unfortunate men struggling with their captors, fighting, and denying the accusation, until they are out of hearing.

As soon as the king thinks that he has had enough of the business, he rises abruptly, picks up his spears, and goes off, leading his dog with him.

The native account of the origin of the Waganda kingdom is very curious. According to them, the country which is now called Uganda was previously united with Unyoro, a more northerly kingdom, of which we shall presently treat. Eight generations back there came from Unyoro a hunter named Uganda, bringing with him a spear, a shield, a woman, and a pack of dogs. He began to hunt on the shores of the lake, and was so successful that he was joined by vast numbers of the people, to whom he became a chief.

Under his sway, the hitherto scattered people assumed the character of a nation, and began to feel their strength. Their leading men then held a council on their government, and determined on making Uganda their king. "For," said they, "of what avail to us is the king of Unyoro? He is so far distant that, when we sent him a cow as a present, the cow had a calf, and that calf became a cow and gave birth to another calf, and yet the present has not reached the king. Let us have a king of our own." So they induced Uganda to be their king, changed his name to Kimera, and assigned his former name to the country.

Kimera, thus made king, took his station on a stone and showed himself to his new subjects, having in his hand his spears and shield, and being accompanied by a woman and a dog; and in this way all succeeding kings have presented themselves to their subjects. All the Waganda are, in consequence, expected to keep at least two spears, a shield and a dog, and the officers are also entitled to have drums. The king of Unyoro heard of the new monarch, but did not trouble himself about a movement at such a distance, and so the kingdom of Uganda became an acknowledged reality.

However, Kimera organized his people in so admirable a manner, that he became a perfect terror to the king of Unyoro, and caused him to regret that, when Kimera's power was not yet consolidated, he had not crushed him. Kimera formed his men into soldiers, draughted them into different regiments, drilled and organized them thoroughly. He cut roads through his kingdom, traversing it in all directions. He had whole fleets of boats built, and threw bridges over rivers wherever they interrupted his line of road. He descended into the minutest particulars of domestic polity, and enforced the strictest sanitary system throughout his country, not even suffering a house to be built unless it possessed the means of cleanliness.

Organization, indeed, seems now to be implanted in the Waganda mind. Even the

mere business of taking bundles of wood into the palace must be done in military style. "After the logs are carried a certain distance, the men charge up-hill with walking-sticks at the slope, to the sound of the drum, shouting and chorusing. On reaching their officer, they drop on their knees to salute, by saying repeatedly in one voice the word 'nyans' (thanks). Then they go back, charging down-hill, stooping simultaneously to pick up the wood, till step by step, it taking several hours, the neatly cut logs are regularly stacked in the palace yards."

Each officer of a district would seem to have a different mode of drill. The Wazeewah, with long sticks, were remarkably well-disciplined, shouting and marching all in regular time, every club going through the same movement; the most attractive part of the drill being when all crouched simultaneously, and then advanced in open ranks, swinging their bodies to the roll of their drums.

By such means Kimera soon contrived to make himself so powerful that his very name was dreaded throughout Unyoro, into which country he was continually making raids. If, for example, at one of his councils he found that one part of his dominions was deficient in cattle or women, he ordered one or two of his generals to take their troops into Unyoro, and procure the necessary number. In order that he might always have the means of carrying his ideas into effect, the officers of the army are expected to present themselves at the palace as often as they possibly can, and if they fail to do so, they are severely punished; their rank is taken from them, their property confiscated, and their goods, their wives, and their children are given to others.

In fact, Kimera proceeded on a system of reward and punishment: the former he meted out with a liberal hand; the latter was certain, swift, and terrible.

In process of time Kimera died, and his body was dried by being placed over an oven. When it was quite dry, the lower jaw was removed and covered with beads; and this, together with the body, were placed in tombs, and guarded by the deceased monarch's favourite women, who were prohibited even from seeing his successor.

After Kimera's death, the people proceeded to chose a king from among his many children, called "Warangira," or princes. The king elect was very young, and was separated from the others, who were placed in a suite of huts under charge of a keeper. As soon as the young prince reached years of discretion, he was publicly made king, and at the same time all his brothers except two were burned to death. The two were allowed to live in case the new king should die before he had any sons, and also as companions for him. As soon as the line of direct succession was secured, one of the brothers was banished into Unyoro and the other allowed to live in Uganda.

When Captains Speke and Grant arrived in Uganda, the reigning sovereign was M'tesa, the seventh in succession from Kimera. He was about twenty-five years of age, and, although he had not been formally received as king, wielded a power as supreme as if he had passed through this ceremony. He was wise enough to keep up the system which had been bequeathed to him by his ancestors, and the Uganda kingdom was even more powerful in his time than it had been in the days of Kimera. A close acquaintance proved that his personal character was not a pleasant one, as indeed was likely when it is remembered that he had possessed illimitable power ever since he was quite a boy, and in consequence had never known contradiction.

He was a very fine-looking young man, and possessed in perfection the love of dress, which is so notable a feature in the character of the Waganda. They are so fastidious in this respect, that for a man to appear untidily dressed before his superiors would entail severe punishment, while, if he dared to present himself before the king with the least disorder of apparel, immediate death would be the result. Even the royal pages, who rush about at full speed when performing their commissions, are obliged to hold their skin cloaks tightly round them, lest any portion of a naked limb should present itself to the royal glance.

The appearance of M'tesa is well described by Captain Speke:—"A more theatrical sight I never saw. The king, a good-looking, well-formed young man of twenty-five, was sitting upon a red blanket, spread upon a square platform of royal grass, encased in tiger-grass reeds, scrupulously dressed in a new 'mbugu (or grass-cloth). The hair of his head

was cut short, except upon the top, where it was combed up into a high ridge, running from stem to stern, like a cock's comb. On his neck was a very neat ornament—a large ring of beautifully-worked small beads, forming elegant patterns by their various colours. On one arm was another bead ornament, prettily devised, and on the other a wooden charm, tied by a string covered with a snake skin. On every finger and toe he had alternate brass and copper rings, and above the ankles, half-way up the calf, a stocking of very pretty beads.

"Everything was light, neat, and elegant in its way; not a fault could be found with the taste of his 'getting-up.' For a handkerchief, he had a well-folded piece of bark, and a piece of gold-embroidered silk, which he constantly employed to hide his large mouth when laughing, or to wipe it after a drink of plantain wine, of which he took constant and copious draughts from little gourd cups, administered by his ladies in waiting, who were at once his sisters and his wives. A white dog, spear, shield, and woman—the Uganda cognizance—were by his side, as also a host of staff officers, with whom he kept up a brisk conversation, on one side; and on the other was a band of 'Wichwézi,' or lady sorcerers."

"These women are indispensable appendages to the court, and attend the king wherever he goes, their office being to avert the evil eye from their monarch, and to pour the plantain wine into the royal cups. They are distinguished by wearing dried lizards on their heads, and on their belts are fastened goat-skin aprons, edged with little bells. As emblems of their office, they also carry very small shields and spears, ornamented with cock-hackles.

M'tesa's palace is of enormous dimensions, and almost deserves the name of a village or town. It occupies the whole side of a hill, and consists of streets of huts arranged as methodically as the houses of a European town, the line being preserved by fences of the tall yellow tiger-grass of Uganda. There are also squares and open spaces, and the whole is kept in perfect order and neatness. The inner courts are entered by means of gates, each gate being kept by an officer, who permits no one to pass who has not the king's permission. In case his vigilance should be evaded, each gate has a bell fastened to it on the inside, just as they are hung on shop-doors in England.

In the illustration on page 463, the artist has selected the moment when the visitor is introduced to the immediate presence of the king. Under the shade of the hut the monarch is seated on his throne, having on one side the spears, shield, and dog, and on the other the woman, these being the accompaniments of royalty. Some of his pages are seated near him, with their cord turbans bound on their tufted heads, ready to obey his slightest word. Immediately in front are some soldiers saluting him, and one of them, to whom he has granted some favour, is floundering on the ground, thanking, or "n'yanzigging," according to the custom of the place.

On the other side is the guest, a man of rank, who is introduced by the officer of the gate. The door itself, with its bells, is drawn aside, and over the doorway is a rope, on which are hung a row of charms. The king's private band is seen in the distance, performing with its customary vigour.

The architecture of the huts within these enclosures is wonderfully good, the Waganda having great natural advantages, and making full use of them. The principal material in their edifices is reed, which in Uganda grows to a very great height, and is thick and strong in the stem. Grass for thatching is also found in vast quantities, and there is plenty of straight timber for the rafters. The roof is double, in order to exclude the sunbeams, and the outer roof comes nearly to the ground on all sides. The fabric is upheld by a number of poles, from which are hung corn-sacks, meat, and other necessities.

The interior is separated into two compartments by a high screen made of plantain leaf, and within the inner apartment the cane bedstead of the owner is placed. Yet, with all this care in building, there is only one door, and no window or chimney; and although the Waganda keep their houses tolerably clean, the number of dogs which they keep fill their huts with fleas, so that when a traveller takes possession of a house, he generally has the plantain screen removed, and makes on the floor as large a fire as possible, so as to exterminate the insect inhabitants.

The ceremonies of receiving a royal guest are as elaborate as the architecture. Officers of rank step forward to greet him, while musicians are in attendance, playing on the various instruments of Uganda, most of them being similar to those which have already been described. Even the height of the seat on which the visitor is to place himself is rigorously determined, the chief object seeming to be to force him to take a seat lower than that to which he is entitled. In presence of the king, who sits on a chair or throne, no subject is allowed to be seated on anything higher than the ground; and if he can be induced to sit in the blazing sunbeams, and wait until the king is pleased to see him, a triumph of diplomacy has been secured.



RECEPTION OF A VISITOR.

When the king has satisfied himself with his guest, or thinks that he is tired, he rises without any warning, and marches off to his room, using the peculiar gait affected by the kings of Uganda, and supposed to be imitated from the walk of the lion. To the eyes of the Waganda, the "lion's step," as the peculiar walk is termed, is very majestic, but to the eyes of a European it is simply ludicrous, the feet being planted widely apart, and the body swung from side to side at each step. If any of my readers should have known Christ's Hospital, they may remember the peculiar style of walking which was termed "spadging," and which used to be, and may be now, an equivalent to the "lion-step" of the Uganda king.

After M'tesa had received his white visitor, he suddenly rose and retired after the royal custom, and, as etiquette does not permit him to eat until he had seen his visitors, he took the opportunity of breaking his fast.

... Round the king, as he sits on his grass-covered throne, are his councillors and officers,

squatted on the ground, with their dresses drawn tightly around them, and partly seated on the royal leopard skins which are strewn on the ground. There is also a large drum, decorated with little bells strung on wire arches, and some smaller drums, covered with beads and cowrie shells, worked into various patterns.

Outside the inner circle sit the ordinary officers, and while the king is present not a word is spoken, lest he should take offence at it; and not an eye is lifted, lest a casual glance might fall on one of the king's women, and be the precursor of a cruel death.

The Waganda are much given to superstition, and have a most implicit faith in charms. The king is very rich in charms, and whenever he holds his court, has vast numbers of them suspended behind him, besides those which he carries on his person. These charms are made of almost anything that the magician chooses to select. Horns, filled with magic powder, are perhaps the most common, and these are slung on the neck or tied on the head if small, and kept in the huts if large.

Their great object of superstitious dread is a sort of water-spirit, which is supposed to inhabit the lake, and to wreak his vengeance upon those who disturb him. Like the water-spirits of the Rhine, this goblin has supreme jurisdiction, not only on the lake itself, but in all rivers that communicate with it; and the people are so afraid of this aquatic demon, that they would not allow a sounding-line to be thrown into the water, lest perchance the weight should happen to hit the water-spirit and enrage him. The name of this spirit is M'gussa, and he communicates with the people by means of his own special minister or priest, who lives on an island, and is held in nearly as much awe as his master.

M'tesa once took Captain Speke with him to see the magician. He took also a number of his wives and attendants, and it was very amusing, when they reached the boats, to see all the occupants jump into the water, ducking their heads so as to avoid seeing the royal women, a stray glance being sure to incur immediate death. They proceeded to the island on which the wizard lived.

"Proceeding now through the trees of this beautiful island, we next turned into the hut of the M'gussa's familiar, which at the further end was decorated with many mystic symbols, among them a paddle, the badge of his high office; and for some time we sat chatting, when pombé was brought, and the spiritual medium arrived. He was dressed in Wichwézi fashion, with a little white goatskin apron, adorned with various charms, and used a paddle for a walking-stick. He was not an old man, though he affected to be, walking very slowly and deliberately, coughing asthmatically, glimmering with his eyes and mumbling like a witch. With much affected difficulty he sat at the end of the hut beside the symbols alluded to, and continued his coughing full half an hour, when his wife came in in the same manner, without saying a word, and assumed the same affected style.

"The king jokingly looked at me and laughed, and then at these strange creatures by turns, as much as to say, 'What do you think of them?' but no voice was heard, save that of the old wife, who croaked like a frog for water, and when some was brought, croaked again because it was not the purest of the lake's produce—had the first cup changed, wetted her lips with the second, and hobbled away in the same manner as she had come."

The scene within the sorcerer's hut is shown in the illustration on page 465. The king is seated near the door, accompanied by his wives, while the sorcerer's wife is seen hobbling out of the hut, leaning on a staff. The man himself is distinguished by the paddle in his hand, the emblem of the deity whom he serves, and listening to him is a group of the king's officers. Behind the screen are a number of paddles and other aquatic implements, and on the ground is laid the whitened skull of a hippopotamus.

Some of their magic horns are thought to have the power of attracting, and others of repelling, rain, according as they are exposed or taken under shelter. The powder in these horns has to be renewed periodically—a clever invention of the magicians for increasing their fees. On their pathways and roads, which are very numerous and well kept, they occasionally place a long stick in the ground, with a shell or other charm on the top, or suspend the shell on the overhanging branch of a tree. Similar wands, on a smaller scale,

are kept in the houses, and bits of feathers, rushes, and other articles are tied behind the door. Snake-skin is of course much used in making these charms, and a square piece of this article is hung round the neck of almost every man of this country.

The religion of the Waganda is of course one inspired by terror, and not by love, the object of all their religious rites being to avert the anger of malignant spirits. Every new moon has its own peculiar worship, which is conducted by banging drums, replenishing the magic horns, and other ceremonies too long to describe. The most terrible of their rites is that of human sacrifice, which is usually employed when the king desires to look into the future.



THE WATER-SPIRITS HIGH PRIEST

The victim is always a child, and the sacrifice is conducted in a most cruel manner. Having discovered by his incantations that a neighbour is projecting war, the magician slays a young child, and lays the bleeding body in the path on which the soldiers pass to battle. Each warrior steps over the bleeding body, and thereby is supposed to procure immunity for himself in the approaching battle. When the king makes war, his chief magician uses a still more cruel mode of divination. He takes a large earthen pot, half fills it with water, and then places it over the fireplace. On the mouth of the pot he lays a small platform of crossed sticks, and having bound a young child and a fowl, he lays them on the platform, covering them with another pot, which he inverts over them. The fire is then lighted, and suffered to burn for a given time, when the upper pot is removed, and the victims inspected. If they should both be dead, it is taken as a sign that the war must be deferred for the present; but if either should be alive, war may be made at once.

Speaking of these and other black tribes, Captain Speke very rightly observes: "How the negro has lived so many ages without advancing seems marvellous, when all the countries surrounding Africa are so forward in comparison. And, judging from the progressive state of the world, one is led to suppose that the African must soon either step out from his darkness, or be superseded by a being superior to himself. Could a government be formed for them like ours in India, they would be saved, but without it I fear there is very little chance. For at present the African neither can help himself nor be helped by others, because his country is in such a constant state of turmoil that he has too much anxiety on hand looking out for his food to think of anything else.

"As his fathers did, so does he. He works his wife, sells his children, enslaves all he can lay hands on, and, unless when fighting for the property of others, contents himself with drinking, singing, and dancing like a haboon, to drive dull care away. A few only make cotton cloth, or work in wool, iron, copper, or salt, their rule being to do as little as possible, and to store up nothing beyond the necessities of the next season, lest their chiefs or neighbours should covet and take it from them."

The same experienced traveller then proceeds to enumerate the many kinds of food which the climate affords to any one of ordinary industry, such as horned cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, fowls, ducks, and pigeons, not to mention the plantain and other vegetable products, and expresses a feeling of surprise that, with such stores of food at his command, the black man should be so often driven to feed on wild herbs and roots, dogs, cats, rats, snakes, lizards, insects, and other similar animals, and should be frequently found on the point of starvation, and be compelled to sell his own children to procure food. Moreover, there are elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotamus, buffaloes, giraffes, antelopes, guinea-fowls, and a host of other animals, which can be easily captured in traps or pitfalls, so that the native African lives in the midst of a country which produces food in boundless variety. The reasons for such a phenomenon are simple enough, and may be reduced to two,—namely, utter want of foresight and constitutional indolence.

As to the question of slavery, it may perhaps be as well to remark that slaves are not exclusively sold to white men. On the contrary, there is no slave-holder so tedious of his acquired rights as the black man, and, for every slave sold to a white man, are bought by the dark races, whether on the east or west of Africa. And, when a slave begins to raise himself above a mere menial rank, his first idea is to buy slaves himself, because they are the articles of merchandise which is most easily to be procured, and so, as Captain Speke well observes, slavery begets slavery *ad infinitum*. The summary of Captain Speke's experience is valuable. "Possessed of a wonderful amount of loquacity, great risibility, but no stability—a creature of impulse—a grown child short—at first sight it seems wonderful how he can be trained to work, for there is no law, no home to bind him. He would run away at any moment, and, presuming on this, he sins, expecting to be forgiven. Great forbearance, occasionally tintured with fatherly severity, is, I believe, the best dose for him. For he says to his master, after sinning, 'You ought to forgive and to forget, for are you not a big man who would harbouring spite, though for a moment you may be angry? Flog me if you like, but do not keep count against me, or else I shall run away, and what will you do then?'

The burying-places of the Waganda are rather elaborate. Captain Grant has described the curiosity to enter one of them, and describes it as follows: "Two huts on a hill appeared devoted to the remains of the dead. On getting over the fence surrounding them, a lawn having straight walks led up to the doors, where a screen of bark shut out the view of the interior. Conquering a feeling of delicacy, I entered one of the huts. I found a fixed bedstead of cane, curtained as if to shade its bed of grass from the mosquito, spears, charms, sticks with strange crooks, tree-creepers, miniature idol-huts, grass, &c. These were laid in order in the interior, but no one was there, and we were told that it was a mausoleum."

Many of such houses were seen on the hill-sides, but few so elaborately built. Usually they were little more than square patches of ground enclosed with a reed-fence. These were called by the name of "Loahleh," or sacred ground.

CHAPTER XL

THE WANYORO.

CHARACTER OF THE WANYORO TRIBE—DIRTY HABITS—MODE OF GOVERNMENT—KING KAMRASI—
HIS DESPOTIC CHARACTER—HIS BODY-GUARD AND THEIR PRIVILEGES—HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE
—HIS GRASPING SELFISHNESS—A ROYAL VISIT—KAMRASI'S COWARDICE—EXECUTION OF CRIMINALS
—CRUSHING A REBELLION—LAWS OF SUCCESSION—THE KING'S SISTERS—WANYORO SINGING—
CONDITION OF WOMEN—FOOD OF THE WANYORO—CARRYING PROVISIONS ON THE MARCH—USES
OF THE PLANTAIN-TREE—FRAUDS IN TRADE—SUPERSTITIONS—THE MAGICIAN AT WORK—THE
HORNED DOG—SPADE-MONEY.

PROCEEDING still northwards, we come to the land of Unyoro, from which, as the reader will remember, the country of Uganda was separated. The inhabitants of Unyoro form a very unpleasant contrast to those of Uganda, being dirty, mean-looking, and badly dressed. The country, too, is far inferior to Uganda, which might be made into a perpetually blooming garden; for, as the traveller leaves the equator and passes to the north, he finds that the rains gradually decrease, and that vegetation first becomes thin, then stunted, and lastly disappears altogether. The same structure of language prevails here as in Uganda, so that the people of Unyoro are called Wanyoro, and a single person is a M'yoro.

The character of the Wanyoro is quite on a par with their appearance, for they are a mean, selfish, grasping set of people, sadly lacking the savage virtue of hospitality, and always on the look-out for opportunities to procure by unfair means the property of others. They seem, indeed, to be about as unpleasant a nation as can well be imagined, and in almost every point afford a strong contrast to others which have already been described.

They are singularly dirty in their domestic habits, their huts being occupied equally by men, goats, and fowls, and the floor, which is thickly covered with straw, is consequently in a most abominable condition. It is so bad, indeed, that even the natives are obliged to make a raised bedstead on which to sleep. Even the king's palace is no exception to the general rule; the cattle are kept within the enclosure, and even his very sleeping-hut is freely entered by calves. To visit the "palace" without stilts and a respirator was too severe a task even to so hardened a traveller as Captain Speke, but the king walked about among the cows, ankle-deep in all sorts of horrors, and yet perfectly at his ease.

The government of this country is pure despotism, the king possessing irresponsible and unquestioned power. The subject can really possess property, but only holds it by the king's pleasure. This theory is continually reduced to practice, the king taking from one person, and giving, or rather, lending to another, anything that he chooses,—land, cattle, slaves, wives, and children being equally ranked in the category of property.

The king who reigned over Uganda at the time when Captain Speke visited it was named Kamrasi. He was a man who united in himself a singular variety of characters.

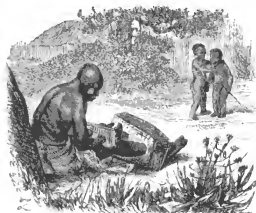
Merciless, even beyond the ordinary type of African cruelty; capricious as a spoiled child, and scattering death and torture around for the mere whim of the moment; inhospitable and repellent according to the usual Wanyoro character; covetous and grasping to the last degree; ambitious of regaining the lost portion of his kingdom, and yet too cowardly to declare war, he was a man who scarcely seemed likely to retain his hold on the sceptre.

Yet, although contemptible as he was in many things, he was not to be despised, and, although no one cared to meet him as a friend, all knew that he could be a most dangerous enemy. For he possessed a large share of cunning, which stood him in stead of the nobler virtues which ought to adorn a throne, and ruled his subjects by a mixture of craft and force. His system of espionage would have done honour to M. de Sartines, and there was nothing that happened in his country that he did not know.

The whole land was divided into districts, and over each district was set an officer who was responsible for everything which occurred in it, and was bound to give information to the king. The least failure in this respect entailed death or the "shoe," which

was nearly as bad, and often terminated in death. The "shoe" is simply a large and heavy log of wood with an oblong slit cut through it. Into this slit the feet are passed, and a stout wooden peg is then driven through the log and between the ankles, so as to hold the feet tightly imprisoned. As to the exact position of the peg, the executioner is in no way particular; and if he should happen to drive it against, instead of between, the ankles, he cares nothing about it. Consequently, the torture is often so great, that those who have been so imprisoned have died of sheer exhaustion.

In order to be able to carry out his orders without having a chance of disobedience, he kept a guard of armed soldiers, some five hundred in number. These men always carried their shields and



CULPRIT IN THE SHOE.

spears; the latter have hard blades, kept very sharp, and their edges defended by a sheath, neatly made of antelope-skin, sewn together with thongs. The ordinary spears are not nearly so good, because the Wanyoro are not remarkable for excellence in smith's work, and the better kind of spear-heads which are hawked through the country are bought by the Waganda, who are a richer people.

This body-guard is dressed in the most extraordinary manner, their chief object seeming to be to render themselves as unlike men and as like demons as possible. They wear leopard or monkey skins by way of tunic, strap cows' tails to the small of their backs, and tie a couple of antelope's horns on their heads, while their chins are decorated with long false beards, made of the bushy ends of cows' tails.

When Sir S. Baker visited Kamrasi, this body-guard rushed out of the palace to meet him, dancing, yelling, screaming, brandishing their spears, pretending to fight among themselves, and, when they reached their visitors, flourishing their spears in the faces of the strangers, and making feints of attack. So sudden was their charge, and so menacing their aspect, that several of his men thought that they were charging in real earnest, and begged him to fire at them. Being, however, convinced that their object was not to kill, but to do him honour, he declined to fire, and found that the threatening body of men

were simply sent by Kamrasi as his escort. Had his armed Turks been with him, they would certainly have received these seeming demons with a volley.

A curious instance of his craft was given by his reception of Sir S. Baker. When the traveller was first promised an interview, Kamrasi ordered his brother, M'Gambi, to personate him, while he himself, disguised as one of the escort, secretly watched the travellers. M'Gambi executed his office admirably, and personated his royal brother to perfection, asking for everything which he saw—guns, watches, beads, and clothes being equally acceptable, and finished by asking for Lady Baker. In case the latter article should be thought more valuable than the others, he offered to give one of his own wives in exchange. This proposal nearly cost M'Gambi his life, and it may be that the wily king had foreseen the possibility of some such result when he ordered his brother to personate him, and permitted him to take his place on the copper stool of royalty. In fact, M'Gambi did admit that the king was afraid that his visitors might be in league with an adverse power.

In order to attach his guards to his person, Kamrasi allowed them all kinds of licence, permitting them to rob and plunder as much as they liked; his theory being that as everything within his reach belonged to him, he in reality did no harm to his subjects, the loss eventually falling on himself. Thus it will be seen that the king was a far-sighted man in some things, and that he knew how to rule by fear, if not by love.

He was tall and slender, and scarcely looked his age, which was about forty, and his features on the whole were good, as were his eyes, which were soft and gentle, sadly belying his character. His face was, however, disfigured by the national custom of removing the lower incisor and eye-teeth, and he said that the dentist who performed the operation had been rewarded with a fee of a hundred cows. His colour was dark brown, and but for the sinister expression of his countenance, he would really be a handsome man.

His features were, however, rather disfigured by the scars which covered his forehead, and which still remained as vestiges of sundry cauterizations. In Unyoro, the actual cautery, i.e. a red-hot iron, is in great favour as a means of cure; and whenever a man chooses to intoxicate himself with native beer or imported rum, and to suffer the usual penalty of a headache on the following morning, he immediately thinks that he is bewitched, and proceeds to drive out the demon by burning his forehead in a multitude of spots. Kamrasi had gone a little beyond the ordinary custom, and had applied the hot iron to his nose, causing such a scar that he was anxious to have it removed, and his nose restored to its ordinary colour.

He did not take to European clothing, preferring the manufactures of his own country. His ordinary dress was a mantle tied round his waist and descending to his feet. Sometimes it was made of cloth, and at others of skins; but it was always of a light red colour, and was decorated with little patches of black cloth, with which it was covered. He had his head shaved at intervals, but between the times of shaving his hair grew in little knobby tufts, like those of the Bosjesman. He wore but few ornaments, the chief being a necklace of beads, which hung to his waist.

Kamrasi had a very tolerable idea of effect, as was seen from the manner in which he received his guests. A hut was built for the express purpose, and within it was the royal throne, i.e. a stool—to sit on which is the special privilege of royalty. A quantity of grass was formed into a rather high platform, which was covered first with cow-hides and then with leopard-skins, the latter being the royal fur. Over this throne was hung a canopy of cow-skin, stretched on every side and suspended from the roof, in order to keep dust off the royal head. On the throne sat Kamrasi, enveloped in fine grass-cloth, his left wrist adorned with a bracelet, and his hair carefully dressed. He sat calm, motionless, and silent, like an Egyptian statue, and with unchanged countenance contemplated the wonderful white men of whom he had heard so much.

It is hardly possible to conceive a more unpleasant person than Kamrasi, putting aside the total want of cleanliness which he exhibited, and which may be considered as a national and not as an individual characteristic. His avarice induced him to wish for the presence of travellers who would create a new line of trade, while his intense cowardice

made him fear a foe in every stranger. He was horribly afraid of M'tesa, and when he found that white travellers had been hospitably received by that potentate, he thought that they must come with sinister intentions, and therefore was on his guard against his fancied foes.

When he got over his fears, he was as provoking in the character of mendicant as he had been in that of a terrified despot. When Sir S. Baker was in his dominions, Kamrasi insisted on paying him a visit, although he knew well that his guest was only just recovering from fever, and therefore had not been able to attend at the palace.

"Although I had but little remaining from my stock of luggage except the guns, ammunition, and astronomical instruments, I was obliged to hide everything underneath the beds, lest the avaricious eyes of Kamrasi should detect a 'want.' True to his appointment, he appeared with numerous attendants, and was ushered into my little hut. I had a very rude but serviceable arm-chair that one of my men had constructed—in this the king was invited to sit. Hardly was he seated, when he leant back, stretched out his legs, and, making some remark to his attendants concerning his personal comfort, he asked for the chair as a present. I promised to have one made for him immediately. This being arranged, he surveyed the barren little hut, vainly endeavouring to fix his eyes upon something that he could demand. But, so fruitless was his search, that he laughingly turned to his people and said, 'How was it that they wanted so many porters if they have nothing to carry?' My interpreter explained that many things had been spoiled during the storms on the lake, and had been left behind; that our provisions had long since been consumed, and that our clothes were worn out—that we had nothing left but a few beads.

"'New varieties, no doubt,' he replied; 'give me all that you have of the small blue and the large red.'

"We had carefully hidden the main stock, and a few had been arranged in bags to be produced as the occasion might require. These were now unpacked by the boy Saat, and laid before the king. I told him to make his choice, which he did, precisely as I had anticipated, by making presents to his surrounding friends out of my stock, and monopolizing the remainder for his share. The division of the portions among his people was a modest way of taking the whole, as he would immediately demand their return on quitting my hut.

"No sooner were the beads secured than he repeated the original demand for my watch and the No. 24 double rifle; these I resolutely refused. He then requested permission to see the contents of a few of the baskets and bags that formed our worn-out luggage. There was nothing that took his fancy except needles, thread, lancets, medicines, and a small tooth-comb. The latter interested him exceedingly, as I explained that the object of the Turks in collecting ivory was to sell it to Europeans, who manufactured it into many articles, among which were small tooth-combs, such as he then examined. He could not understand how the teeth could be so finely cut.

"Upon the use of the comb being explained, he immediately attempted to practise upon his woolly head. Failing in the operation, he adapted the instrument to a different purpose, and commenced scratching beneath the wool most vigorously. The effect being satisfactory, he at once demanded the comb, which was handed to each of the surrounding chiefs, all of whom had a trial of its properties. Every head having been scratched, it was returned to the king, who handed it to Quonga, the headman that received his presents. So complete was the success of the comb, that he proposed to send me one of the largest tusks, which I was to take to England and cut into as many small tooth-combs as it would produce for himself and his chiefs."

During this interview, Kamrasi discovered a case of lancets, and begged for them, as they were so well adapted for paring his nails. Also, he opened the medicine-chest, and was so determined to take a dose at once that Sir S. Baker took a little revenge, and administered three grains of tartar emetic, not to be taken until he reached his own hut. As to the No. 24 rifle, which has been already mentioned, Kamrasi was always hankering after it, at one time openly begging for it, and at another asking to borrow it just for a day or two, when, of course, it never would have escaped the grasp of the royal clutches.

This provoking man evidently considered his guests to be sent especially for his own aggrandizement, and his only idea was, how to use them best for his service. Having once got them safely into his domains, he had no intention of letting them go again until he had squeezed them quite dry. First, he wanted to make them pay for the privilege of entering his dominions; and when they had once entered, he was sure to make them pay before they got out again. His first *ruse* was, to pretend that they were weak and insignificant, whereas he was great and strong, and that, if they wanted his protection, they must pay for it. When once they had entered his district, and had shown themselves to be more formidable than he had chosen to admit, he asked them to aid him against his enemies, and to lead his army against the adverse tribe.

This stratagem failing, even though he was good enough to offer half his kingdom for the privilege of alliance, he had still one resource,—namely, forbidding them to leave his kingdom until he gave permission, *i.e.* until he had extracted from them everything of value. To leave the country without his permission was simply impossible, on account of the system of espionage which has already been mentioned, and, although it might have been possible to force a way by dint of superior arms, such a struggle would have neutralized the very object of the expedition.

Bully though he was where he could tyrannize with safety, he was a most contemptible coward when he thought himself in the least danger. A very amusing example was shown during the visit of Sir S. Baker.

One morning, just at sunrise, Kamrasi came hastily into his hut shorn of all regal dignity. In his hands he grasped two spears and a rifle, and wanted to bring them into the hut, contrary to all etiquette. This could not be allowed, and he reluctantly left them outside. He had laid aside his usual cold and repellent manner, and was full of eagerness. He had also thrown off his ordinary apparel of beautifully-dressed skins, and only wore a kind of short kilt and a scarf across his shoulders. Knowing that an attack was meditated by a neighbouring chief, and having seen the people all in war costume—horned, bearded, and tailed—Sir S. Baker naturally thought that Kamrasi was in fighting costume, and congratulated him on its appropriate lightness.

"*I fight!*" exclaimed the king. "*I am not going to fight; I am going to run away, and put on this dress to be able to run faster.*"

He then explained in great trepidation that the enemy were approaching with a hundred and fifty muskets, and that, as it was useless to fight against such odds, he meant to run away and hide himself in the long grass, and his guest had better follow his example. From the anticipated attack he was saved by the timely intervention of his guest, and the only mark of gratitude which he showed was to ask again for the double-barrelled rifle.

Still, in spite of these unamiable characteristics, the man had his redeeming points; and although he was, on occasions and on a large scale, almost as cruel as a man could be, he did not commit those continual murders of his subjects which disgraced the reign of M'tesa. Personal chastisement was used in many cases in which M'tesa would have inflicted death, and probably a lengthened torture besides.

The mode of passing sentence on a prisoner was very remarkable. Should the king or his brother M'Gamhi touch him with the point of a spear, the executioners immediately fall upon him with their clubs, and beat him to death. But, if he should touch the prisoner with his stick, the executioners instantly pierce him with their spears; so that the instrument used in killing the man is always the opposite to that with which the king touches him.

Even in cases where death was inflicted, the criminal was generally killed by a blow with a club on the back of the neck. There were of course exceptions to this rule. For example, a hostile chief, named Rionga, one of his thirty brothers, had been taken prisoner by a treacherous act on the part of Kamrasi, who first pretended to make peace, then invited him to a banquet, and seized upon him while he was off his guard. Kamrasi then ordered him to die by a cruel death. There was a hut with high mud walls and no doorway. Into this hut Rionga was hoisted, and the king gave orders that on the following morning the hut should be fired, and its inmate burned to death.

Another chief, however, named Sali, ingeniously brought out great quantities of beer, knowing that the guards would be sure to assemble in any spot where beer was to be found. This they did; and while they were engaged at one side of the prison drinking, dancing, and singing, Sali's men were engaged on the other side in digging a hole through the mud wall of the hut, and soon succeeded in making an aperture large enough to allow the prisoner to make his escape.

After this feat, Sali, having seen how treacherous Kamrasi could be, ought to have secured his own safety by flight, but chose to remain, thinking that his share in the rescue would not be discovered. Kamrasi, however, suspected his complicity, and had him arrested at once. He was sentenced to the cruel death of being dismembered while alive, and the sentence was carried out by cutting off his hands at the wrists, his arms at the elbows, and so on until every joint was severed. While undergoing this torture, he proved himself a brave man by trying to help his friends, calling aloud from the stake that they had better escape while they could, lest they should suffer the same penalty.

A curious custom prevails in Unyoro with regard to the king's sisters. Like other women of rank, they are fattened on curdled milk, and attain such a size that they are not able to walk, and, whenever they leave the hut, each has to be borne on a litter by eight men. Each woman consumes daily the milk of fifteen or twenty cows, a cow producing barely one quart of milk. Yet, though this fattening process is an ordinary preliminary to marriage, the king's sisters are forbidden to marry, and are kept in strict seclusion in his palace. So are his brothers; but, unlike the king of Uganda, he does not think it necessary to kill them when he reaches the throne.

During the short interval of peace which followed upon Sir S. Baker's intervention, the people gave themselves up to debauchery, the men drinking and dancing and yelling, blowing horns and beating drums all through the night. The women took no part in this amusement, inasmuch as they had been hard at work in the fields all day, while their husbands had been sleeping at home. Consequently they were much too tired to dance, and tried to snatch what rest they could in the midst of the night-long din.

"The usual style of singing was a rapid chant, delivered as a solo, while at intervals the crowd burst out in a deafening chorus, together with the drums and horns. The latter were formed of immense gourds, which, growing in a peculiar shape, with long bottle necks, were easily converted into musical instruments. Every now and then a cry of 'Fire!' in the middle of the night enlivened the *ennui* of our existence. The huts were littered deep with straw, and the inmates, intoxicated, frequently fell asleep with their huge pipes alight, which, falling in the dry straw, at once occasioned a conflagration. In such cases the flames spread from hut to hut with immense rapidity, and frequently four or five hundred huts in Kamrasi's large camp were destroyed by fire, and rebuilt in a few days. I was anxious concerning my powder, as, in the event of fire, the blaze of the straw hut was so instantaneous that nothing could be saved; should my powder explode, I should be entirely defenceless. Accordingly, after a conflagration in my neighbourhood, I insisted on removing all huts within a circuit of thirty yards of my dwelling. The natives demurring, I at once ordered my men to pull down the houses, and thereby relieved myself from drunken and dangerous neighbours."

The condition of the women in Unyoro is not at all agreeable, as indeed may be inferred from the brief mention of the hard work which they have to perform. They are watched very carefully by their husbands, and beaten severely if they ever venture outside the palisades after sunset. For unfaithfulness, the punishment seems to be left to the aggrieved husband, who sometimes demands a heavy fine, sometimes cuts off a foot or a hand, and sometimes inflicts the punishment of death.

Dirty as are the Wanyoro in some things, in others they are very neat and clean. They are admirable packers, and make up the neatest imaginable parcels. Some of these parcels are surrounded with the bark of the plantain, and some with the pith or interior of a reed, from which the outside has been carefully stripped, so as to leave a number of snow-white cylinders. These are laid side by side, and bound round the object, producing a singularly pretty effect. Little mats, formed of shreds of these reeds, are very much used, especially as covers to beer jars. When a M'yoro is on the march, he always carries

with him a gourd full of plantain wine. The mouth of the gourd is stopped with a bundle of these reed-shreds, through which passes a tube, so that the traveller can always drink without checking his pace, and without any danger of spilling the liquid as he walks.

In their diet the Wanyoro make great use of the plantain, and it is rather remarkable that, in a land which abounds with this fruit, it is hardly possible to procure one in a ripe state, the natives always eating them while still green. The plantain-tree is to the Wanyoro the chief necessity of existence, as it affords them means for supplying all the real wants of life. Sometimes the plantain is boiled and eaten as a vegetable, and sometimes it is dried and ground into meal, which is used in making porridge. The fruit is also peeled, cut into slices, and dried in the sun, so as to be stowed away for future consumption, and from this dried plantain the Wanyoro make a palatable and nutritious soup. Wine, or rather beer, is made from the same fruit, which thus supplies both food and drink.

The tree itself is most useful, the leaves being split into shreds, and woven into cloth of remarkable elegance, and the bark is stripped off, and employed like paper in wrapping up parcels of the meal. Strong ropes and the finest thread are twisted from the plantain fibre, and the natives are clever at weaving ornamental articles, which look so like hair, that a very close inspection is needful to detect the difference. In all these manufactures the Wanyoro show a neatness of hand and delicacy of taste that contrast strangely with the slovenly, careless, and repulsive habits of their daily life.

Curdled milk is much used by the natives, who employ it in fattening their wives and daughters, but, unlike the Arabs, they will not mix red pepper with it, believing that those who eat the capsicum will never be blessed with children. Butter is used as an unguent, and not for food, and the natives are very much scandalized at seeing the white visitors eat it.

According to the custom of their nation, they once played a clever trick. Butter is packed most carefully in leaves, a little bit being allowed to project as a sample. One day the natives brought some butter to their white visitors, but as it was quite rancid it was rejected. They took it away, and then brought a fresh supply, which was approved and purchased. But, when the wrapper was taken off, it was found that the butter was the same that had been refused, the natives having put a little piece of fresh butter at the top.

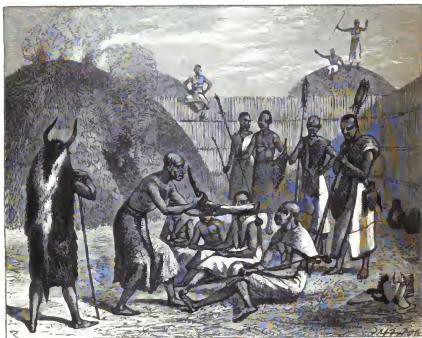
Itinerant cheesemongers play very similar tricks at the present day, plugging a totally uneatable cheese with bits of best Cheshire, and scooping out the plugs by way of sample.

As to religion, the Wanyoro have none at all. They are full of superstition, but, as far as is known, they have not the least idea of a religion which can exercise any influence on the actions. In common with most uncivilized people, they make much of each new moon, this being the unit by which they reckon their epochs, and salute the slender crescent by profuse dancing and gesticulation.

They have a wonderful faith in demons, with whom the prophets or wizards aver that they hold communication. Some of their guesses at the future occasionally come true. For example, one of the men of the expedition was said to be possessed by a demon, who told him that the expedition would succeed, but that the demon required one man's life and another man's illness. This prediction was literally accomplished, one of the escort being murdered, and Captain Grant falling seriously ill. Again the same man saw the demon, who said that in Uganda one man's life would be required, and accordingly Kari, a man belonging to the expedition, was murdered. A third time, when in Unyoro, he saw the demon, who said that no more lives were needed, but that the expedition would succeed, though it would be protracted. And such eventually proved to be the case.

The magicians lay claim to one most valuable power,—namely, that of finding lost articles. On one occasion Captain Speke saw the whole process. A rain-gauge and its bottle had been stolen, and every one disclaimed knowledge of it. A sorcerer was therefore summoned to find the missing article. The following account of the proceeding is given by Captain Speke:—

"At 9 A.M. the time for measuring the fall of rain for the last twenty-four hours, we found the rain-gauge and bottle had been removed, so we sent Kidgwiga to inform the king we wished his magicians to come at once and institute a search for it. Kidgwiga immediately returned with the necessary adept, an old man, nearly blind, dressed in strips of old leather fastened to the waist, and carrying in one hand a cow's horn primed with magic powder, carefully covered on the mouth with leather, from which dangled an iron bell.



THE MAGICIAN AT WORK.

"The old creature jingled the bell, entered our hut, squatted on his hams, looked first at one, then at the other—inquired what the missing things were like, grunted, moved his skinny arm round his head, as if desirous of catching air from all four sides of the hut, then dashed the accumulated air on the head of his horn, smelt it to see if all was going right, jingled the bell again close to his ear, and grunted his satisfaction; the missing articles must be found.

"To carry out the incantation more effectually, however, all my men were sent for to sit in the open before the hut, but the old doctor rose, shaking the horn and tinkling the bell close to his ear. He then, confronting one of the men, dashed the horn forward as if intending to strike him on the face, then smelt the head, then dashed at another, and so on, till he became satisfied that my men were not the thieves.

"He then walked into Grant's hut, inspected that, and finally went to the place where the bottle had been kept. Then he walked about the grass with his arm up, and jingling the bell to his ear, first on one side, then on the other, till the track of a hyæna gave him the clue and in two or three more steps he found it. A hyæna had carried it

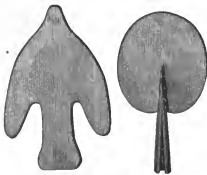
into the grass and dropped it. Bravo, for the infallible horn! and well done the king for his honesty in sending it! so I gave the king the bottle and gauge, which delighted him amazingly; and the old doctor, who begged for pombé, got a goat for his trouble."

As in Uganda, the sorcerers are distinguished by the odd ornaments which they wear; dried roots, lizards, lions' claws, crocodiles' teeth, little tortoise-shells, and other objects being strung together and tied on their heads. There is also an order of religious mendicants called "Bandwa," both sexes being eligible to the office. They are distinguished by an abundance of ornaments, such as bits of shining metal, and little tinkling bells, and one man had distinguished himself greatly by wearing the skin of a long-haired monkey down his back from the top of his head, to which he had attached a couple of antelope horns. The women when dressed in the full robes of office look very handsome, being clothed in coloured skins, and wearing turbans made of the plantain bark. They walk about from house to house singing their peculiar songs, and always expecting a present. The office of a Bandwa is not hereditary, for any one may join them by undergoing certain ceremonies, and the children of a Bandwa are at liberty to follow any business that they may happen to like. Although they are mendicants, they do not wholly depend on their profession, having cattle and other property of their own.

In many countries where superstition takes the place of religion, the birth of twins is looked upon as a bad omen, which must be averted by the sacrifice of one or both of the children. In Unyoro the case is different. Captain Speke had been annoyed by certain drums and other musical instruments which were played day and night without cessation, and, when he inquired as to their object, was told that they were in honour of twins that had been born to Kamrasi, and that they would be played in the same manner for four months.

The use of the cow's horn in magic is explained by a tradition that once upon a time there was a dog with a horn. When the dog died, the horn was stuffed with magic powder, and was a powerful charm in war, soldiers who stepped over it when on the march being thereby rendered victorious. Kamrasi possessed several magic horns, and when he sent an ambassador to a neighbouring potentate, one of these horns was hung round the man's neck, as his credentials; and when he returned, he brought with him another magic horn as a proof that his message had been delivered. No one dared to touch a man who bore so potent an emblem, and this was peculiarly fortunate, as on one occasion Kamrasi had sent an expedition which took with them six hundred majembé, or iron spades, which form a sort of currency, the expenditure of two majembé per diem being sufficient to buy food for the whole party. Laden with wealth therefore as they were, the magic horn protected the party, and they performed their journey in safety.

2 War charms are in great request, and while Captain Speke was in Unyoro he saw the preliminary act in charm-making. A feud was in action between Kamrasi and the Chopi tribe. Kamrasi therefore sent spies into the Chopi district, with orders to bring some grass from the hut of a chief. This they did, with the addition of a spear, much to Kamrasi's delight, who thought that the possession of this weapon would enable him to bewitch the spears as well as the courage of his enemies, and so prevent the weapons from hurting his tribe.



THE MAJEMBÉ, OR SPADE MONEY.

In order to ensure prosperity to their family, or to cure a sick relative, the Wanyoro kill some animal, split it open, and lay it at the intersection of two cross roads, such spot being held by them, as by the Balonda, in great reverence. If the man is rich enough, he sacrifices a goat, but if not, a fowl will answer; and if a man is very poor indeed, he makes a frog serve his purpose.

These people seem to have kept their burial ceremonies very secret, as a funeral was never seen in Central Africa, but it is said that the dead are buried near the house or in the cattle-fold, wrapped in bark-cloth or a cow-skin. When the king dies his body is first dried, and then the lower jaw-bone is removed and buried by itself. Officers of the palace are privileged to have their heads and hands treated in the same manner.



ORNAMENTED SPEAR HEAD.

CHAPTER XLI

GANI, MADI, OBBO, AND KYTCH.

POSITION OF THE OANI TRIBE—THEIR HOSPITABLE CHARACTER—GANI ARCHITECTURE—SINGULAR MODE OF DRESS—THE GANI QUEUE—TOILET MAKING IN PUBLIC—THE MADI TRIBE—CARE OF CHILDREN—DRESS OF THE WOMEN—VARIOUS DANCES—MADI VILLAGES—ILL-TREATMENT OF THE NATIVES—POSITION OF THE OBBO TRIBE—GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE NATIVES—SINGULAR MODE OF DRESS—KATCHIBA, THE OBBO CHIEF—HIS LAHOR FAMILY—HIS REPUTATION AS A SOHCHERER—INGENUOUS ESCAPE FROM A DILEMMA—KATCHIBA'S PALACE—A VISIT TO THE CHIEF—HIS HOSPITALITY AND GENEROUS CONDUCT—CHARACTER OF KATCHIBA.

We now come to a large district about lat. 3° N. and long. 32° E. This country is inhabited by a group of tribes, who are perhaps more remarkable for their style of dress than any which we have yet noticed. We will first take the GANI.

The Gani are a hospitable people, and when Captains Speke and Grant passed through their country, received them with great kindness, even though they had never seen white men before, and might be expected to take alarm at an armed party penetrating into their land.

One day, when Captain Grant was walking in search of plants, he was hailed by a native, who contrived to make him understand that he wished to conduct the white man. He was very polite to his guest, acting as pioneer, beating down the thorny branches that obstructed the path, and pointing out the best places for crossing rocks. He evidently thought that Captain Grant had lost his way, and so guided him back to the camp, previously leaving his spear in a hut, because to appear armed in the presence of a superior is contrary to their system of etiquette.

The mode of welcome was rather remarkable. The old chief of the village advanced to meet the strangers, accompanied by his councillors and a number of women, one of whom carried a white chicken, and the others beer and a bunch of a flowering plant. When the two parties met, the chief, whose name was Chongi, took the fowl by one leg, stooped, and swung it backwards and forwards close to the ground, and then passed it to his male attendants, who did the same thing. He then took a gourd full of beer, dipped the plant in it, and sprinkled the liquid over his guests, and then spread cow-skins under a tree by way of couches, on which his guests might repose. They were next presented with a supply of beer, which was politely called water.

The villages of the Gani are extremely neat, and consist of a quantity of huts built round a flat cleared space which is kept exceedingly smooth and neat. In the middle of this space are one or two miniature huts made of grass, and containing idols, and a few horns are laid near them. When the Gani lay out plans for a new village, they mostly allow one large tree to remain in the centre of the cleared space, and under its shade the inhabitants assemble and receive their guests. The houses are shaped like beehives, are very low, and composed simply of a mud wall and a roof made of bamboo

thatched with grass. The doors are barely two feet high, but the supple-bodied Gani, who have never been encumbered with clothes, can walk through the aperture with perfect ease. The floor is made of clay beaten hard, and is swept with great care. Cow-skins are spread on the floor by way of beds, and upon these the Gani sleep without any covering.

Close to the huts are placed the grain-stores, which are very ingeniously made. First, a number of rude stone pillars are set in a circle, having flat stones laid on their tops, much resembling the remains of Stonehenge. Upon these is secured an enormous cylinder of basket-work plastered with clay, the top of which is covered with a conical roof of bamboo and grass. When a woman wishes to take grain out of the store-house, she places against it a large branch from which the smaller boughs have been cut, leaving stumps of a foot or ten inches in length, and by means of this rude ladder she easily ascends to the roof.

The appearance of this tribe is most remarkable, as they use less clothing and more ornament than any people at present known. We will begin with the men. Their dress is absolutely nothing at all as far as covering the body is concerned, but, as if to compensate for this nudity, there is scarcely a square inch of the person without its adornment. In the first place, they use paint as a succedaneum for dress, and cover themselves entirely with colours, not merely rubbing themselves over with one tint, but using several colours, and painting themselves in a wonderful variety of patterns, many of them showing real artistic power, while others are simply grotesque.

Two young men who came as messengers from Chongi had used three colours. They had painted their faces white, the pigment being wood ashes, and their bodies were covered with two coats of paint, the first purple, and the second ashen grey. This latter coat they had scraped off in irregular patterns, just as a painter uses his steel comb when graining wood, so that the purple appeared through the grey, and looked much like the grain of mahogany. Some of the men cover their bodies with horizontal stripes, like those of the zebra, or with vertical stripes running along the curve of the spine and limbs, or with zigzag markings of light colours. Some very great dandies go still further, and paint their bodies chequer-fashion, exactly like that of a harlequin. White always plays a large part in their decorations, and is often applied in broad bands round the waist and neck.

The head is not less gorgeously decorated. First the hair is teased out with a pin, and is then dressed with clay so as to form it into a thick felt-like mass. This is often further decorated with pipe-clay laid on in patterns, and at the back of the neck is inserted a piece of sinew about a foot in length. This odd-looking queue is turned up, and finished off at the tip with a tuft of fur, the end of a leopard's tail being the favourite ornament. Shells, beads, and other ornaments are also woven into the hair, and in most cases a feather is added by way of a finishing touch. The whole contour of the head-dress is exactly like that of the pantaloon of the stage, and the sight of a man with the body of a harlequin and the head of a pantaloon is too much for European gravity to withstand.

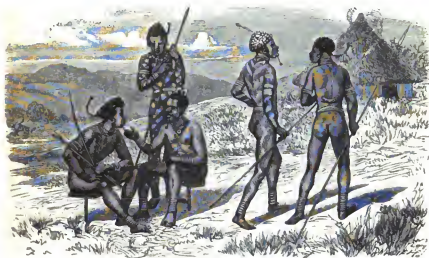
Beside all this elaborate decoration, the men wear a quantity of bracelets, anklets, and earrings. The daily toilet of a Gani dandy occupies a very long time, and in the morning the men may be seen in numbers sitting under the shade of trees, employed in painting their own bodies or dressing the hair of a friend, and applying paint where he would not be able to guide the brush. As may be inferred, they are exceedingly vain of their personal appearance; and when their toilet is completed, they strut about in order to show themselves, and continually *pose* themselves in attitudes which they think graceful, but which might be characterised as conceited.

Each man usually carries with him an odd little stool with one leg, and instead of sitting on the ground, as is done by most savages, the Gani make a point of seating themselves on these little stools, which look very like those which are used by Swiss herdsmen when they milk the cows, and only differ from them in not being tied to the body.

The women are not nearly such votaries of fashion as their husbands, principally because they have to work and to nurse the children, who would make short work of any paint that they might use. Like the parents, the children have no clothes, and are merely

suspended in a rather wide strap passing over one shoulder of the mother and under the other. As, however, the rays of the sun might be injurious to them, a large gourd is cut in two pieces, hollowed out, and one of the pieces inverted over the child's head and shoulders.

The Gani have cattle, but are very poor herdsmen, and have suffered the herd to deteriorate in size and quality. They cannot even drive their cattle properly, each cow recognising a special driver, who grasps the tail in one hand and a horn in the other, and thus drags and pushes the animal along.



GROUP OF GANI AND MADI.

THE MADI TRIBE.

NOT very far from the Gani are situated the MADI tribe. They are dressed, or rather undressed, in a somewhat similar fashion. The women are very industrious, and are remarkable for the scrupulously neat and clean state in which they keep their huts. Every morning the women may be seen sweeping out their houses, or kneeling in front of the aperture which serves as a door, and patting and smoothing the space in front of the doorway. They are also constantly employed in brewing beer, grinding corn, and baking bread.

They take great care of their children, washing them daily with warm water, and then, as they have no towels, licking them dry as a cat does with her kittens. When the child is washed and dried, the mother produces some fat with which vermilion has been mixed, and rubs it over the child's body until it is all red and shining. The next process is to lay the child on its back upon a goatskin, the corners of which are then gathered up and tied together so as to form a cradle. Should the mother be exceedingly busy, she hangs

the cradle on a peg or the branch of a tree, the child offering no objection to this treatment.

The dress of the women consists of a petticoat reaching a little below the knees, but they often dispense with this article of dress, and content themselves with a few leathern thongs in front, and another cluster of thongs behind. In default of leathern thongs, a bunch of chickweed answers every purpose of dress. They wear iron rings round their arms above the elbow, and generally have a small knife stuck between the rings and the arm.

They are fond of wearing little circular discs cut from a univalve shell. These shells are laid out to bleach on the tops of the huts, and, when whitened, are cut into circles about as large as fourpenny pieces, each having a hole bored through the middle. They are then strung together and worn as belts, and have also the advantage of being used as coin with which small articles of food, as fruit or beer, could be purchased. The men are in the habit of wearing ornaments made of the tusks of the wild boar. The tusks are tied on the arm above the elbow, and contrast well with the naturally dark hue of the skin and the brilliant colours with which it is mostly painted.

Whenever a child is born, the other women assemble round the hut of the mother, and make a hideous noise by way of congratulation. Drums are beaten violently, songs are sung, hands are clapped, gratulatory sentences are yelled out at the full stretch of the voice, while a wild and furious dance acts as an accompaniment to the noise. As soon as the mother has recovered, a goat is killed, and she steps backwards and forwards over its body.

One of the women, the wife of the commandant, went through a very curious ceremony when she had recovered her health after her child was born. She took a bunch of dry grass, and lighted it, and then passed it from hand to hand three times round her body while she walked to the left of the door. Another grass tuft was then lighted, and she went through a similar performance as she walked to the front of the door, and the process was again repeated as she walked to the right.

The dances of the Madi are rather variable. The congratulatory dance is performed by jumping up and down without any order, flinging the legs and arms about, and flapping the ribs with the elbows. The young men have a dance of their own, which is far more pleasing than that of the women. Each takes a stick and a drum, and they arrange themselves in a circle, beating the drums, singing, and converging to the centre, and then retiring again in exact time with the rhythm of the drum beats.

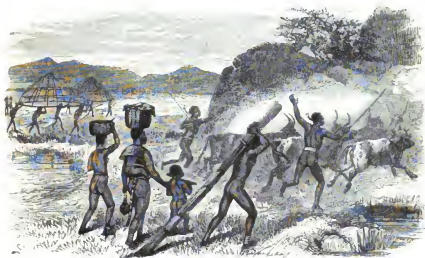
Sometimes there is a grand general dance, in which several hundred performers take part. "Six drums of different sizes, slung upon poles, were in the centre; around these was a moving mass of people, elbowing and pushing one another as at a fair; and outside them a ring of girls, women, and infants, faced an outer circle of men sounding horns and armed with spears and clubs, their heads ornamented with ostrich feathers, helmets of the cowrie shell, &c. Never had I seen such a scene of animated savage life, nor heard a more savage noise. As the two large circles of both sexes jumped simultaneously to the music, and moved round at every leap, the women sang and jingled their masses of bracelets, challenging and exciting the men, forcing them to various acts of gallantry, while our Seedees joined in the dance, and no doubt touched many a fair breast."

The weapons of the Madi are spears and bows and arrows. The spears are about six feet long, with bamboo shafts, and with an iron spike at the butt for the purpose of sticking it in the ground. They are better archers than the generality of African tribes, and amuse themselves by setting up marks, and shooting at them from a distance of forty or fifty yards. The arrows are mostly poisoned, and always so when used for war.

The villages of the Madi are constructed in a very neat manner, the floors being made of a kind of red clay beaten hard and smoothed. The thresholds of the doors are of the same material, but are paved with pieces of broken earthenware pressed into the clay, and ingeniously joined so as to form a kind of pattern. In order to prevent cattle from entering the huts, movable bars of bamboo are generally set across the entrance. The

villages are enclosed with a fence, and the inhabitants never allow the sick to reside within the enclosure. They do not merely eject them, as they do in some parts of Africa, but build a number of huts outside the walls by way of a hospital.

The roofs of the huts are cleverly made of bamboo and grass, and upon them is lavished the greater part of the labour of housebuilding. If therefore the Madi are dissatisfied with the position of a village, or find that neighbouring tribes are becoming troublesome, they quietly move off to another spot, carrying with them the most important part of their houses, namely the roofs, which are so light that a few men can carry them. A village on the march presents a most curious and picturesque spectacle, the roofs of the huts carried on the heads of four or five men, the bamboo stakes borne by others, while some are driving the cattle, and the women are carrying their children and their simple household furniture.



REMOVAL OF A VILLAGE.

The Turkish caravans that occasionally pass through the country are the chief cause of these migrations, as they treat the Madi very roughly. When they come to a village, they will not take up their abode inside it, but carry off the roofs of the huts and form a camp with them outside the enclosure. They also rob the corn-stores, and if the aggrieved owner ventures to remonstrate, he is knocked down by the butt of a musket, or threatened with its contents. In some parts of the country these men had behaved so cruelly to the natives that, as soon as the inhabitants of a village saw a caravan approaching, all the women and children forsook their dwellings, and hid themselves in the bush and grass.

THE OBBO.

WE now come to OBBO, a district situated in lat. $4^{\circ} 55' N.$ and long. $31^{\circ} 46' E.$ Sir S. Baker spent a considerable time in Obbo—much more, indeed, than was desirable—and in consequence learned much of the peculiarities of the inhabitants.

In some respects the natives look something like the Gani and Madi, especially in their fondness for paint, their disregard of clothing, and the mode in which they dress their heads. In this last respect they are even more fastidious than the tribes which have been just mentioned, some of them having snowy white wigs descending over their shoulders, and finished off with the curved and tufted pigtail. The shape of the Obbo head-dress has been happily compared to that of a beaver's tail, it being wide and flat, and thicker in the middle than at the edges. The length of this head-dress is not owing to the wearer's own hair, but is produced by the interweaving of hair from other sources. If, for example, a man dies, his hair is removed by his relations, and woven with their head-dresses as a souvenir of the departed, and an addition to their ornaments. They also make caps of shells strung together and decorated with feathers; and instead of clothing they wear a small skin slung over one shoulder.

The men have an odd fashion of wearing round their necks several thick iron rings, sometimes as many as six or eight, all brightly polished, and looking like a row of dog-collars. Should the wearer happen to become stout, these rings press so tightly on his throat that he is nearly choked. They also are fond of making tufts of cow's tails, which they suspend from their arms just above the elbows. The most fashionable ornaments, however, are made of horse-tails, the hairs of which are also highly prized for stringing beads. Consequently, a horse's tail is an article of considerable value, and in Obbo-land a cow can be purchased for a horse's tail in good condition.

Paint is chiefly used as a kind of war uniform. The colours which the natives use are vermilion, yellow, and white, but the particular pattern is left much to their own invention. Stripes of alternate scarlet and yellow, or scarlet and white, seem, however, to form the ordinary pattern, probably because they are easily drawn, and present a bold contrast of colour. The head is decorated with a kind of cap made of cowrie shells, to which are fixed several long ostrich plumes that droop over the shoulders.

Contrary to usual custom, the women are less clad than the men, and, until they are married, wear either no clothing whatever, or only three or four strings of white beads, some three inches in length. Some of the prudes, however, tie a piece of string round their waists, and stick in it a little leafy branch, with the stalk uppermost. "One great advantage was possessed by this costume. It was always clean and fresh, and the nearest bush (if not thorny) provided a clean petticoat. When in the society of these very simple, and, in demeanour, always modest Eves, I could not help reflecting upon the Mosaic description of our first parents."

Married women generally wear a fringe of leathern thongs, about four inches long and two wide. Old women mostly prefer the leaf branch to the leathern fringe. When young they are usually pretty, having well-formed noses, and lips but slightly partaking of the negro character. Some of the men remind the spectators of the Somauli.

Katchiba, the chief of Obbo, was rather a fine-looking man, about sixty years of age, and was a truly remarkable man, making up by craft the lack of force, and ruling his little kingdom with a really firm, though apparently lax, grasp. In the first place, having a goodly supply of sons, he made them all into sub-chiefs of the many different districts into which he divided his domains. Owing to the great estimation in which he was held by his people, fresh wives were continually being presented to him, and at first he was rather perplexed by the difficulty of accommodating so many in his palace. At last he hit on the expedient of distributing them in the various villages through which he was accustomed to make his tour, so that wherever he was he found himself at home.

It so happened, that when Sir S. Baker visited Katchiba he had one hundred and sixteen children living. This may not seem to be a very wonderful fact when the number of his wives is considered. But, in Africa, plurality of wives does not necessarily imply a corresponding number of children, several of these many-wived chiefs having only one child to every ten or twelve wives. Therefore the fact that Katchiba's family was so very large raised him greatly in the minds of his people, who looked upon him as a great sorcerer, and had the most profound respect for his supernatural power.

Katchiba laid claim to intercourse with the unseen world, and to authority over the elements; rain and drought, calm and tempest, being supposed by his subjects to be equally under his command. Sometimes, if the country had been afflicted with drought beyond the usual time of rain, Katchiba would assemble his people, and deliver a long harangue, inveighing against their evil doings, which had kept off the rain.

These evil doings, on being analysed, generally proved to be little more than a want of liberality towards himself. He explained to them that he sincerely regretted their conduct, which "has compelled him to afflict them with unfavourable weather, but that it is their own fault. If they are so greedy and so stingy that they will not supply him properly, how can they expect him to think of their interests? No goats, no rain; that's our contract, my friends," says Katchiba. "Do as you like: I can wait; I hope you can." Should his people complain of too much rain, he threatens to pour storms and lightning upon them for ever, unless they bring him so many hundred baskets of corn, &c. &c. Thus he holds his sway.

"No man would think of starting on a journey without the blessing of the old chief, and a peculiar 'hocus-pocus' is considered necessary from the magic hands of Katchiba, that shall charm the traveller, and preserve him from all danger of wild animals upon the road. In case of sickness he is called in, not as M.D. in our acceptance, but as Doctor of Magic, and he charms both the hut and the patient against death, with the fluctuating results that must attend professionals, even in sorcery.

"His subjects have the most thorough confidence in his power; and so great is his reputation, that distant tribes frequently consult him, and beg his assistance as a magician. In this manner does old Katchiba hold his sway over his savage but credulous people; and so long has he imposed upon the public, that I believe he has at length imposed upon himself, and that he really believes that he has the power of sorcery, notwithstanding repeated failures."

Once, while Sir S. Baker was in the country, Katchiba, like other rain-makers, fell into a dilemma. There had been no rain for a long time, and the people had become so angry at the continued drought, that they assembled round his house, blowing horns, and shouting execrations against their chief, because he had not sent them a shower which would allow them to sow their seed. True to his policy, the crafty old man made light of their threats, telling them that they might kill him if they liked, but that, if they did so, no more rain would ever fall. Rain in the country was the necessary result of goats and provisions given to the chief, and as soon as he got the proper fees, the rain should come. The rest of the story is so good, that it must be told in the author's own words.

"With all this bluster, I saw that old Katchiba was in a great dilemma, and that he would give anything for a shower, but that he did not know how to get out of the scrape. It was a common freak of the tribes to sacrifice their rain-maker, should he be unsuccessful. He suddenly altered his tone, and asked, 'Have you any rain in your country?' I replied that we had every now and then. 'How do you bring it? Are you a rain-maker?' I told him that no one believed in rain-makers in our country, but that we knew how to bottle lightning (meaning electricity). 'I don't keep mine in hottles, but I have a house full of thunder and lightning,' he most coolly replied; 'but if you can bottle lightning, you must understand rain-making. What do you think of the weather to-day?'

"I immediately saw the drift of the cunning old Katchiba; he wanted professional advice. I replied that he must know all about it, as he was a regular rain-maker. 'Of course I do,' he answered; 'but I want to know what *you* think of it.' 'Well,' I said, 'I don't think we shall have any steady rain, but I think we may have a heavy shower

in about four days' (I said this, as I had observed fleecy clouds gathering daily in the afternoon). 'Just my opinion,' said Katchiba, delighted. 'In four, or perhaps in five, days I intend to give them one shower—just one shower; yes, I'll just step down to them, and tell the rascals that if they will bring me some goats by this evening, and some corn by to-morrow morning, I will give them in four or five days just one shower.'

"To give effect to his declaration, he gave several toots on his magic whistle. 'Do you use whistles in your country?' inquired Katchiba. I only replied by giving so shrill and deafening a whistle on my fingers, that Katchiba stopped his ears, and, relapsing into a smile of admiration, he took a glance at the sky from the doorway, to see if any effect had been produced. 'Whistle again,' he said; and once more I performed like the whistle of a locomotive. 'That will do; we shall have it,' said the cunning old rain-maker; and, proud of having so knowingly obtained 'counsel's opinion' in his case, he toddled off to his impatient subjects.

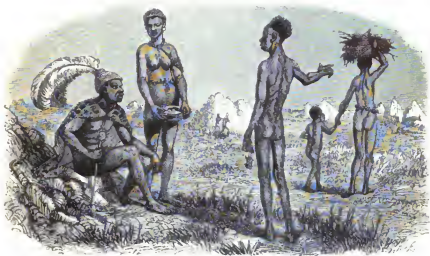
"In a few days a sudden storm of rain and violent thunder added to Katchiba's renown, and after the shower horns were blowing and nogaras beating in honour of their chief. *Entre nous*, my whistle was considered infallible."

When his guests were lying ill in their huts, struck down with the fever which is prevalent in hot and moist climates such as that of Obbo, Katchiba came to visit them in his character of magician, and performed a curious ceremony. He took a small leafy branch, filled his mouth with water, and squirted it on the branch, which was then waved about the hut, and lastly stuck over the door. He assured his sick guests that their recovery was now certain; and, as they did recover, his opinion of his magical powers was doubtless confirmed.

After their recovery they paid a visit to the chief, by his special desire. His palace consisted of an enclosure about a hundred yards in diameter, within which were a number of huts, all circular, but of different sizes; the largest, which was about twenty-five feet in diameter, belonging to the chief himself. The whole of the courtyard was paved with beaten clay, and was beautifully clean, and the palisades were covered with gourds and a species of climbing yam. Katchiba had but little furniture, the chief articles being a few cow-hides, which were spread on the floor and used as couches. On these primitive sofas he placed his guests, and took his place between them. The rest of his furniture consisted of earthen jars, holding about thirty gallons each, and intended for containing or brewing beer.

After offering a huge gourd full of that beverage to his guests, and having done ample justice to it himself, he politely asked whether he should sing them a song. Now Katchiba, in spite of his grey hairs, his rank as chief, and his dignity as a sorcerer, was a notable buffoon, a savage Grimalki, full of inborn and grotesque fun, and so they naturally expected that the performances would be, like his other exhibitions, extremely ludicrous. They were agreeably disappointed. Taking from the hand of one of his wives a "rababa," or rude harp with eight strings, he spent some time in tuning it, and then sang the promised song. The air was strange and wild, but plaintive and remarkably pleasing, with accompaniment very appropriate, so that this "delightful old sorcerer" proved himself to be a man of genius in music as well as in policy.

When his guests rose to depart, he brought them a sheep as a present; and when they refused it, he said no more, but waited on them through the doorway of his hut, and then conducted them by the hand for about a hundred yards, gracefully expressing a hope that they would repeat their visit. When they reached their hut, they found the sheep there, Katchiba having sent it on before them. In fine, this chief, who at first appeared to be little more than a jovial sort of buffoon, who by accident happened to hold the chief's place, turned out unexpectedly to be a wise and respected ruler, a polished and accomplished gentleman.



GROUP OF THE KYTCH TRIBE.

THE KYTCH.

NOT far from Obbo-land there is a district inhabited by the KYTCH tribe. In 1825 there was exhibited in the principal cities of Europe a Frenchman, named Claude Ambroise Seurat, who was popularly called the "Living Skeleton," on account of his extraordinary leanness, his body and limbs looking just as if a skeleton had been clothed with skin, and endowed with life. Among the Kytch tribe he would have been nothing remarkable, almost every man being formed after much the same model. In fact, as Sir S. Baker remarked of them, they look at a distance like animated slate-pencils with heads to them.

The men of the Kytch tribe are tall, and, but for their extreme emaciation, would be fine figures; and the same may be said of the women. Almost the only specimens of the Kytch tribe who had any claim to rounded forms were the chief and his daughter, the latter of whom was about sixteen, and really good-looking. In common with the rest of the tribe she wore nothing except a little piece of dressed hide about a foot square, which was hung over one shoulder and fell upon the arm, the only attempt at clothing being a belt of jingling iron circlets, and some beads on the head.

Her father wore more clothing than his inferiors, though his raiment was more for show than for use, being merely a piece of dressed leopard skin hung over his shoulders as an emblem of his rank. He had on his head a sort of skull-cap made of white beads, from which drooped a crest of white ostrich feathers. He always carried with him a curious instrument,—namely, an iron spike about two feet in length, with a hollow socket at the butt, the centre being bound with snake-skin. In the hollow butt he kept his tobacco, so that this instrument served at once the offices of a tobacco-box, a dagger, and a club.

It is hardly possible to conceive a more miserable and degraded set of people than the Kytch tribe, and, were it not for two circumstances, they might be considered as the very lowest examples of humanity.

For their food they depend entirely upon the natural productions of the earth, and pass a life which is scarcely superior to that of a baboon, almost all their ideas being limited to the discovery of their daily food. From the time when they wake to the hour when they sleep, they are incessantly looking for food. Their country is not a productive one; they never till the ground, and never sow seed; so that they are always taking from the ground, and never putting anything into it. They eat almost every imaginable substance, animal and vegetable, thinking themselves very fortunate if they ever find the hole of a field-mouse, which they will painfully dig out with the aid of a stick, and then feed luxuriously upon it.

So ravenous are they, that they eat bones and skin as well as flesh; and if by chance they should procure the body of an animal so large that its bones cannot be eaten whole, the Kytch break the bones to fragments between two stones, then pound them to powder, and make the pulverized bones into a sort of porridge. In fact, as has been forcibly remarked, if an animal is killed, or dies a natural death, the Kytch tribe do not leave enough for a fly to feed upon.

The two facts that elevate the Kytch tribe above the level of the beasts are, that they keep cattle, and that they have a law regarding marriage, which, although repugnant to European ideas, is still a law, and has its parallel in many countries which are far more advanced in civilization.

The cattle of the Kytch tribe are kept more for show than for use, and, unless they die, they are never used as food. A Kytch cattle-owner would nearly as soon kill himself, and quite as soon murder his nearest relation, as he would slaughter one of his beloved cattle. The milk of the one is, of course, a singular luxury in so half-starved a country, and none but the wealthiest men are likely ever to taste it.

The animals are divided into little herds, and to each herd there is attached a favourite bull, who seems to be considered as possessing an almost sacred character. Every morning, as the cattle are led out to pasture, the sacred bull is decorated with bunches of feathers tied to his horns, and, if possible, with little bells also. He is solemnly adjured to take great care of the cows, to keep them from straying, and to lead them to the best pastures, so that they may give abundance of milk.

The law of marriage is a very peculiar one. Polygamy is, of course, the custom in Kytch-land, as in other parts of Africa, the husband providing himself with a succession of young wives as the others become old and feeble, and therefore unable to perform the hard work which falls to the lot of African wives. Consequently, it mostly happens that when a man is quite old and infirm he has a number of wives much younger than himself, and several who might be his grandchildren. Under these circumstances, the latter are transferred to his eldest son, and the whole family lives together harmoniously, until the death of the father renders the son absolute master of all the property.



IVORY WAR-TRUMPET. CENTRAL AFRICA.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE NEAM-NAM, DÔR, AND DJOUR TRIBES.

LOCALITY OF THE NEAM-NAM TRIBE—THEIR WARLIKE NATURE—A SINGULAR RECEPTION—EFFECT OF FIRE-ARMS—DRESS AND GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE NEAM-NAM TRIBE—MODE OF HUNTING ELEPHANTS—REMARKABLE WEAPONS—THE DÔR TRIBE AND ITS SUBDIVISIONS—WEAPONS OF THE DÔR—A REMARKABLE POUCH OR QUIVER—THE ARROWS AND THEIR TERRIBLE BARBS—A DÔR BATTLE—TREATMENT OF DEAD ENEMIES—"DROPPING DOWN" UPON THE ELEPHANT—DRESS OF THE DÔR—THE LIP-ORNAMENT—THEIR ARCHITECTURE—CURIOUS APPROACH TO THE VILLAGE—THE WOODEN CHIEFS AND THEIR FOLLOWERS—MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS—THE DJOUR TRIBE—ABSENCE OF CATTLE—THE TSRTSE-FLY—METALLURGY—INGENIOUS SMELTING FURNACE—WOMEN'S KNIVES—EXTENSIVE TRAFFIC—SMOKING—THE BARK "QUIDS."

JUST over the Equator, and in the Nile district, is a very remarkable tribe called the NEAM-NAM. They are a fierce and warlike people, and aggressive towards all the surrounding tribes, making incursions into their territories, and carrying off their children into slavery. Consequently they are held in the utmost dread, and the lands that surround the Neam-Nam borders are left uncultivated, no one daring to occupy them for fear of their terrible neighbours. The Neam-Nam seem not only to have firmly established themselves, but even to have gradually extended their boundaries, their neighbours falling farther and farther back at each successive raid.

When Mr. Petherick passed through their country, many of his porters could not be induced to enter the territory of such a terrible tribe, even though protected by the white man's weapons. Several of them deserted on the way, and at last, when they were come in sight of the first village, the rest flung down their loads and ran away, only the interpreter being secured.

As they neared the village, the menacing sound of the alarm drum was heard, and out came the Neam-Nams in full battle array, their lances in their right hands and their large shields covering their bodies. They drew up in line, and seemed disposed to dispute the passage; but as the party marched quietly and unconcernedly onwards, they opened their ranks and allowed them to enter the village, from which the women and children had already been removed. They then seated themselves under the shade of a large sycamore tree, deposited the baggage, and sat in a circle round it, keeping on all sides a front to the armed natives, who now began to come rather nearer than was agreeable, some actually seating themselves on the travellers' feet. They were all very merry and jocose, pointing at their visitors continually, and then bursting into shouts of approving laughter. There was evidently some joke which tickled their fancy, and by means of the interpreter it was soon discovered.

The fact was, that the Neam-Nam were cannibals, and meant to eat the strangers who had so foolishly trusted themselves in the country without either spears, swords, or shields, but they did not like to kill them before their chief arrived. When this pleasant joke was explained, the astonished visitors were nearly as amused as the Neam-Nam,

knowing perfectly well that their weapons were sufficient to drive off ten times the number of such foes.

Presently the chief arrived—an old, grey-headed man, who, by his sagacity, certainly showed himself worthy of the post which he held. After a colloquy with the interpreter, he turned to his people, and the following extraordinary discourse took place:—

“Neam-Nam, do not insult these strauge men. Do you know whence they come?”

“No; but we will feast on them,” was the rejoinder. Then the old man, holding up his spear, and commanding silence, proceeded thus:

“Do you know of any tribe that would dare to approach our village in such small numbers as these men have done?”

“No” was again voieferated.

“Very well; you know not whence they come, nor do I, who am greatly your senior, and whose voice you ought to respect. Their country must indeed be distant, and to traverse the many tribes between their country and ours ought to be a proof to you of their valour. Look at the things they hold in their hands: they are neither spears, clubs, nor bows and arrows, but inexplicable bits of iron mounted on wood. Neither have they shields to defend their bodies from our weapons. Therefore, to have travelled thus far, depend on it their means of resistance must be as puzzling to us, and far superior to any arms that any tribe, ay, even our own, can oppose to them. Therefore, Neam-Nam, I who have led you to many a fight, and whose counsels you have often followed, say, shed not your blood in vain, nor bring disgrace upon your fathers, who have never been vanquished. Touch them not, but prove yourselves to be worthy of the friendship of such a handful of brave men, and do yourselves honour by entertaining them, rather than degrade them by the continuance of your insults.”

It is impossible not to admire the penetration of this chief, who was wise enough to deduce the strength of his visitors from their apparent weakness, and to fear them for those very reasons that caused his more ignorant and impetuous people to despise them.

Having thus calmed the excitement, he asked to inspect the strange weapons of his guests. A gun was handed to him—the cap having been removed—and very much it puzzled him. From the mode in which it was held, it was evidently not a club; and yet it could not be a knife, as it had no edge; nor a spear, as it had no point. Indeed, the fact of the barrel being hollow puzzled him exceedingly. At last he poked his finger down the muzzle, and looked inquiringly at his guest, as if to ask what could be the use of such an article. By way of answer, Mr. Petherick took a gun, and, pointing to a vulture that was hovering over their heads, fired, and brought it down.

“But before the bird touched the ground, the crowd were prostrate and grovelling in the dust, as if every man of them had been shot. The old man's head, with his hands on his ears, was at my feet; and when I raised him, his appearance was ghastly, and his eyes were fixed on me with a meaningless expression. I thought that he had lost his senses.

“After shaking him several times, I at length succeeded in attracting his attention to the fallen bird, quivering in its last agonies between two of his men. The first sign of returning animation he gave was putting his hand to his head, and examining himself as if in search of a wound. He gradually recovered, and, as soon as he could regain his voice, called to the crowd, who one after the other first raised their heads, and then again dropped them at the sight of their apparently lifeless comrades. After the repeated call of the old man, they ventured to rise, and a general inspection of imaginary wounds commenced.”

This man, Mur-mangae by name, was only a sub-chief, and was inferior to a very great chief, whose name was Dimoo. There is one single king among the Neam-Nam, who are divided into a number of independent sub-tribes, each ruled by its own chief, and deriving its importance from its numbers. While they were recovering from the effect of the shot, Dimoo himself appeared, and, after hearing the wonderful tale, seemed inclined to discredit it, and drew up his men as if to attack. Just then an elephant appeared in the distance, and he determined to use the animal as a test, asking whether the white men's

thunder could kill an elephant as well as a vulture, and that, if it could do so, he would respect them. A party was at once dispatched, accompanied by the chief and all the savages. At the first volley down went most of the Neam-Nam, including the chief, the rest running away as fast their legs could carry them.

After this event the whole demeanour of the people was changed from aggressive insolence to humble respect, and they immediately showed their altered feelings by sending large quantities of milk and porridge for the party, and half a fat dog for Mr. Petherick's own dinner. They also began to open a trade, and were equally astonished and amused that such common and useless things as elephants' tusks could be exchanged for such priceless valuables as beads, and were put in high good-humour accordingly. Up to that time trade had been entirely unknown among the Neam-Nam, and, though the people made great use of ivory in fashioning ornaments for themselves, they never had thought of peaceful barter with their neighbours, thinking that to rob was better than to exchange.

Dimoo, however, still retained some of his suspicious nature, which showed itself in various little ways. At last Mr. Petherick invented on the spur of the moment a plan by which he completely conquered his host. Dimoo had taken an inordinate fancy for the tobacco of his guests, and was always asking for some. As the supply was small, Mr. Petherick did not like to make it still smaller, while, at the same time, a refusal would have been impolitic. So, one day, when the usual request was made, he acceded to it, at the same time telling Dimoo that the tobacco was unsafe to smoke, because it always broke the pipes of those who meditated treachery towards him.

Meanwhile, a servant, who had been previously instructed, filled Dimoo's pipe, at the same time inserting a small charge of gunpowder, for which there was plenty of room, in consequence of the inordinate size of the bowl. Dimoo took the pipe and began to smoke it defiantly, when all at once an explosion took place, the bowl was shattered to pieces, and Dimoo and his councillors tumbled over each other in terror. Quite conquered by this last proof of the white man's omniscience, he humbly acknowledged that he did meditate treachery—not against his person, but against his goods—and that his intention was to detain the whole party until he had got possession of all their property.

The appearance of the Neam-Nam tribe is very striking. They are not quite black, but have a brown and olive tint of skin. The men are better clothed than is usually the case in Central Africa, and wear a home-made cloth woven from bark fibres. A tolerably large piece of this cloth is slung round the body in such a way as to leave the arms at liberty. The hair is plaited in thick masses, extending from the neck to the shoulders.

In the operation of hair-dressing they use long ivory pins, varying from six to twelve or fourteen inches in length, and very slightly curved. One end is smoothly pointed, and the other is much thicker, and for some four inches or so is carved into various patterns, mostly of the zig-zag character which is so prevalent throughout Africa. When the hair is fully combed out and arranged, two of the largest pins are stuck through it horizontally, and a number of shorter pins are arranged in a radiating form, so that they form a semi-circle, something like the large comb of a Spanish lady.

One of these pins is now before me. It is just a foot in length, and at the thick end is almost as large as a black-lead pencil, tapering gradually to the other end. The butt, or base, is covered with a multitude of scratches, which are thought to be ornamental, but which look exactly as if they had been cut by a child who for the first time had got hold of a knife, and they are stained black with a decoction of some root.

The dress of the women consists partly of a piece of cloth such as has been described, but of smaller dimensions, and, besides this, they wear a rather curious apron made of leather. The illustration on page 490 exhibits two of these aprons, both of which were brought from Central Africa by Mr. Petherick. The left-hand specimen is in my collection, and will therefore be described.

Its general appearance somewhat resembles that of the Zulu apron, shown at page 25, fig. 3, but it is not nearly so thick nor so heavy, and indeed is made on a different plan. The solid square at the top is a piece of thick leather doubled in the middle and then

beaten flat. To both of the edges has been firmly sewn a triple row of flat leathern thongs, almost the eighth of an inch in width, and scarcely thicker than brown paper. Six rows of these flat thongs are therefore attached to the upper leather. All the ornament simple as it is, is confined to the front layer of thongs, and consists entirely of iron. Flat strips of iron, evidently made by beating wire flat, are twisted round the thongs and then hammered down upon them, while the end of each thong is further decorated with a ring or loop of iron wire.

The centre of the solid leather is ornamented with a circular piece of iron, boss-shaped, scratched round the edges, and having an iron ring in its centre. The strap which supports the apron is fastened to a couple of iron rings at the upper corners. In some aprons bead ornaments take the place of the iron boss, but in almost every instance there is an ornament of some kind. The women have also an ornament made by cutting little flat pieces of ivory, and placing them on a strip of leather, one over the other, like fish-scales. This ornament is worn as a necklace. They also carve pieces of ivory into a tolerable imitation of cowrie-shells, and string them together as if they were the veritable shells.

Another ornament is here shown, as it exhibits a type of decoration which is prevalent throughout the whole of Central Africa. It is composed of a belt of stout leather—that of the hippopotamus being preferred, on account of its strength and thickness—to which are attached a quantity of empty nutshells. Through the upper end of the nut a hole is bored with a red-hot iron, and an iron ring passes through this hole and another which has been punched through the leather. Two of these nuts are here shown half the size of the specimens. The shell is very hard and thick, and, when the wearer dances with the energetic gesture which accompany such performances, the nuts keep up a continual and rather loud clatter.



NUT-BELLS



WOMEN'S APRONS.

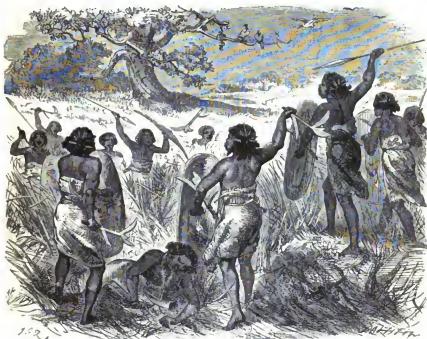


GIRL'S DANCING BELT.

The Neam-Nam all wear leather sandals, and although their clothing is so scanty, they are remarkable for their personal cleanliness, a virtue which is so rare in Africa that it deserves commemoration whenever it does occur.

As may already have been seen, the Neam-Nam are a cannibal race, and always devour the bodies of slain enemies. This repulsive custom is not restricted to enemies, but is extended to nearly all human beings with whom they come in contact, their own tribe not proving any exception. Mr. Petherick was told by themselves that when a Neam-Nam became old and feeble, he was always killed and eaten, and that when any one was at the point of death, the same fate befell them.

Should one of their slaves run away and be captured, he is always slain and eaten as a warning to other slaves. Such an event, however, is of very rare occurrence,



NEAM-NAM FIGHTING

the slaves being treated with singular kindness, and master and slave being mutually proud of each other. Indeed, in many families the slaves are more valued than the children.

Indeed, much of the wealth of the Neam-Nam consists of slaves, and a man measures his importance by the number of slaves whom he maintains. All these slaves belong to some other tribe, and were captured by their owner, so that they are living witnesses of prowess as well as signs of wealth. They are never sold or bartered, and therefore a slave-dealer is not known among them, and they are spared one of the chief curses of Africa. As a general rule, the slaves are so faithful, and are so completely incorporated with the household to which they belong, that in case of war they are armed, and accompany their masters to battle.

The Neam-Nam are skilful hunters, and make great use of fire when chasing the elephant. As they were desirous of procuring tusks to exchange for Mr. Petherick's beads, they anxiously awaited the first rains, which would bring the elephants into their country.

"Successive showers followed, and, after a fortnight's sojourn, a herd of eighteen elephants was announced by beat of tom-tom, as being in the vicinity. Old men, boys, women, and children, collected with most sanguine expectations; and, anxious to witness the scene, I accompanied the hunters—a finer body of well-grown and active men I never beheld. The slaves, many of them from the Baer, but most of them appertaining to unknown tribes from the west, were nearly black, and followed their more noble-looking and olive-coloured masters. Two hours' march—the first part through cultivated grounds and the latter through magnificent bush—brought us to the open plain, covered hip deep with dry grass, and there were the elephants marching leisurely towards us.

"The negroes, about five hundred, swift as antelopes, formed a vast circle round them, and by their yells brought the huge game to a standstill. As it by magic, the plain was on fire, and the elephants, in the midst of the roar and crackling of the flames, were obscured from our view by the smoke. Where I stood, and along the line, as far as I could see, the grass was beaten down to prevent the outside of the circle from being seized in the conflagration; and in a short time—not more than half an hour—the fire having exhausted itself, the cloud of smoke, gradually rising, again displayed the group of elephants standing as if petrified. As soon as the burning embers had become sufficiently extinct, the negroes with a whoop closed from all sides upon their prey. The fire and smoke had blinded them, and, unable to defend themselves, they successively fell by the lances of their assailants. The sight was grand, and, although their tusks proved a rich prize, I was touched at the massacre."

When the Neam-Nam warrior goes out to battle, he takes with him a curious series of weapons. He has, of course, his lance, which is well and



WEAPONS.

strongly put together, the blade being leaf-shaped, like that of a hog-spear, only very much longer. On his left arm he bears his shield, which is made of bark-fibre, woven very closely together, and very thick. The maker displays his taste in the patterns of the work, and in those which he traces upon it with variously coloured dyes. Within the shield he has a sort of wooden handle, to which are attached one or two most remarkable weapons.

One of these is shown at fig. 1 in the accompanying illustration, and is taken, as are the other figures, from specimens in Colonel Lane Fox's collection. They were all brought from Central Africa by Mr. Petherick, to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of this singular tribe. The weapon is wholly flat, the handle included, and is about the thickness of an ordinary sword-blade. The projecting portions are all edged, and kept

extremely sharp, while the handle is rather thicker than the blade, and is rounded and roughened, so as to afford a firm grip to the hand.

When the Neam-Nam comes near his enemy, and before he is within range of a spear-thrust, he snatches one of these strange weapons from his shield, and hurls it at the foe, much as an Australian flings his boomerang, an American Indian his tomahawk, and a Sikh his chakra, giving it a revolving motion as he throws it. Owing to this mode of flinging, the weapon covers a considerable space, and if the projecting blades come in contact with the enemy's person, they are sure to disable, if not to kill him on the spot.

And as several of these are hurled in rapid succession, it is evident that a Neam-Nam warrior is no ordinary foe, and that even the possessor of fire-arms might in reality be overcome if taken by surprise, for, as the "boomerangs" are concealed within the shield, the first intimation of their existence would be given by their sharp blades whirling successively through the air with deadly aim.

Besides the lance and the "boomerangs," each Neam-Nam carries a strangely-shaped knife in a leathern sheath, and, oddly enough, the hilt is always downwards. One of these knives is shown in the left-hand figure of the illustration on page 492. It is sharp at both edges, and is used as a hand-to-hand weapon after the boomerangs have been thrown, and the parties have come too close to use the spear effectually. From the projection at the base of the blade a cord is tied loosely to the handle, and the loop passed over the wrist, so as to prevent the warrior from being disarmed.

Some of the Neam-Nam tribe use a very remarkable shield. It is spindle-shaped, very long and very narrow, measuring only four or five inches in breadth in the middle, and tapering to a point at either end. In the middle a hole is scooped, large enough to contain the hand, and a bar of wood is left so as to form a handle. This curious shield is carried in the left hand, and is used to ward off the lances or arrows of the enemy, which is done by giving it a smart twist.

In principle and appearance it resembles so closely the shield of the native Australian, that it might easily be mistaken for one of those weapons. Sometimes a warrior decorates his shield by covering it with the skin of an antelope, wrapped round it while still wet, and then sewn together in a line with the handle. The Shilloch and Dinka tribes use similar weapons, but their shields are without the hollow guard for the hand, and look exactly like bows without the strings.

Each warrior has also a whistle, or call, made of ivory or antelope's horn, which is used for conveying signals; and some of the officers, or leaders, have large war trumpets, made of elephant's tusks. Two of these trumpets are shown in the illustration, and the reader will observe that, as is usual throughout Africa, they are sounded from the side, like a flute, and not from the end, like ordinary trumpets. Fig. 1 is made from a single large tusk, but fig. 2 represents a composite instrument made of wood and ivory bound firmly together. Both these instruments are from Colonel Lane Fox's collection.



WAR TRUMPETS

Altogether Mr. Petherick passed a considerable time among this justly-dreaded tribe, and was so popular among them, that when he left the country he was accompanied by crowds of natives, and the great chief Dimoo not only begged him to return, but generously offered his daughter as a wife in case the invitation were accepted, and promised to keep her until wanted.

THE DÔR.

PASSING by a number of small and comparatively insignificant tribes, we come to the large and important tribe of the Dôr.

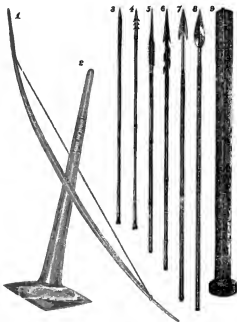
Like all African tribes of any pretence, it includes a great number of smaller or sub-tribes, which are only too glad to be ranked among so important and powerful a tribe, and, for the sake of belonging to it, they forego their own individuality.

Like the Neam-Nam, the Dôr acknowledge no paramount chief, the innumerable sub-tribes of which it is composed being each independent, and nearly all at feud with one another. Indeed the whole political condition of the Dôr is wonderfully similar to that of Scotland, when clan was set against clan, and a continual state of feud prevailed among them, though they all gloried in the name of Scotchmen.

As in the old days of Chevy Chase, a hunt is almost a sure precursor of a fight. The Dôr are much given to hunting, and organize battues on a grand scale. They weave strong nets of bark-fibre, and fasten them between trunks of trees, so as to cover a space of several miles. Antelopes and other game are driven from considerable distances into these nets; and as the hunters have to pass over a large space of country, some of which is sure to be claimed by inimical tribes, a skirmish, if not a regular battle, is sure to take place.

The weapons carried by the Dôr are of rather a formidable description, and some of them are figured in the accompanying illustration. One of the most curious weapons is the club, which is shown at fig. 2. It is about two feet six inches in length, and is remarkable for the shape of the head, which is formed like a mushroom, but has sharp edges. As it is made of very hard wood, it is a most effective weapon, and not even the stone-like skull of a Dôr warrior can resist a blow from it.

The bow exhibits a mode of construction which is very common in this part of Africa, and which must interfere greatly with the power of the weapon. The string doe



BOW, MUSHROOM CLUB, ARROWS, AND QUIVER.

not extend to the tips of the bow, so that eighteen inches or so of the weapon are wasted, and the elasticity impaired. The reader will see that, if the ends of the bow were cut off immediately above the string, the strength and elasticity would suffer no diminution, and that, in fact, the extra weight at each end of the bow only gives the weapon more work to do.

The Africans have a strange habit of making a weapon in such a way that its efficiency shall be weakened as much as possible. Not content with leaving a foot or so of useless wood at each end of the bow, some tribes ornament the weapon with large tufts of loose strings or fibres, about half way between the handle and the tip, as if to cause as much disturbance to the aim as possible. Spears again are decorated with tufts to such an extent that they are rendered quite unmanageable. Examples of such weapons are given on page 441.

Much more care is taken with the arrows than with the bows. As may be seen by reference to the illustration, there is a great variety in the shape of the arrows, as also in their length. They are all iron-headed, and every man seems to make his arrows after his own peculiar fashion. The large, broad-headed form shown at fig. 8 is not at all common, neither is the slightly barbed arrow seen at fig. 7. Figs. 3 and 4 exhibit the most common type of arrow, not only among the Dôr, but among other tribes of Central Africa, while fig. 5 is rather an exceptional modification of the preceding specimen.

Perhaps the most conspicuous and characteristic form is that shown at fig. 6. In my collection there is a most remarkable quiver, once belonging to a warrior of one of the Dôr sub-tribes. It is shown in the illustration on page 496, and, like the preceding weapons, was brought from Central Africa by Mr. Petherick.

The quiver seen in the preceding illustration is a very good specimen of native work, being made of leather neatly formed, while wet, upon a mould, and evidently being the handiwork of an experienced artist. My own specimen, however, is the very rudest example of a quiver that can be conceived, and clearly the work of a mere beginner in the art.

Nothing can be simpler than the construction of this quiver. The maker has cut a strip of antelope hide rather more than three feet in length and fourteen inches in width. He has then poked his knife through the edges at moderately regular intervals, so as to make a series of holes. A thong about half an inch wide has next been cut from the same hide, and passed through the topmost hole or slit, a large knot preventing it from slipping through. It has then been passed through the remaining slits, so as to lace the edges together like the sides of a boot. The bottom is closed by the simple plan of turning it up and lacing it by the same thong to the side of the quiver.

It is hardly possible to conceive any rougher work. The maker has cut the slits quite at random, so that he has occasionally missed one or two, and he has not taken the least pains to bring the sides of the quiver together throughout their length. So stupid or careless has he been, that he has begun by cutting the strip of skin much too narrow, and then has widened it, never taking the pains to sew up the cut, which extends two-thirds down the quiver.

Four or five of the arrows have the leaf-shaped head seen in the preceding cut, and need not be particularly described. Fig. 1 is much the largest of the arrows, being a "cloth-yard shaft," which, but for the absence of feathers, might vie with the weapons of the old English archers. The head is remarkable for a heavy ridge which runs along the centre on both sides. The arrow shown at fig. 3 is not so boldly barbed as that which has just been mentioned, but is quite as formidable a weapon, on account of a thick layer of poison, which begins just behind the head, and extends nearly as far as the shaft.

Figs 2 and 4 are, however, the most characteristic forms. Fig. 2 represents an arrow which is barbed with a wonderful ingenuity, the barbs not being mere projections, but actual spikes, more than an inch in length, and at the base nearly as thick as a crow-quill. They have been separated from the iron head by the blow of a chisel, or some such implement, and have then been bent outwards, and sharpened until the points are like those of needles. Besides these long barbs, the whole of the square neck of the iron is



QUIVER AND ARROWS

jagged exactly like the Bechuana assagai which has been figured on page 314.

Such an arrow cannot be extracted, and the only mode of removing it is to push it through the wound. But the Central Africans have evidently thought that their enemy was let off too cheaply by being allowed to rid himself of the arrow by so simple a process, and accordingly they have invented a kind of arrow which can neither be drawn out nor pushed through. One of these arrows is shown at fig. 4, and the reader will see that there is a pair of reversed barbs just at the junction of the shaft and the iron head, so that when the arrow has once penetrated, it must either be cut out or allowed to remain where it is. Such an arrow is not poisoned, nor does it need any such addition to its terrors.

Both these arrows are remarkable for having the heads fastened to the shaft, first, in the ordinary way, by raw hide, and then by a band of iron, about the sixth of an inch in width. Though shorter than some of the other arrows, they are on that account much heavier.

One of the fights consequent on a hunt is well described by Mr. Petherick. He was sitting in the shade at noon-day, when he perceived several boys running in haste to the village for an additional supply of weapons for their fathers. "The alarm spread instantly that a fight was taking place, and the women *en masse* proceeded to the scene with yellings and shrieks indescribable. Seizing my rifle, and accompanied by four of my followers, curiosity to see a negro fight tempted me to accompany them. After a stiff march of a couple of hours through bush and glade, covered with waving grass reaching nearly to our waists, the return of several boys warned us of the proximity of the fight, and of their fear of its turning against them, the opposing party being the most numerous. Many of the women hurried back to their homes, to prepare, in case of emergency, for flight and safety in the bush. For such an occurrence, to a certain extent, they are always prepared; several parcels of grain and provisions, neatly packed up in spherical forms in leaves surrounded by network, being generally kept ready in every hut for a sudden start.

"Accelerating our pace, and climbing up a steep hill, as we reached the summit, and were proceeding down a gentle slope, I came in contact with Djau and his party in full retreat, and leaping like greyhounds over the low under-wood and high grass. On perceiving me, they halted, and rent the air with wild shouts of

'The White Chief! the White Chief!' and I was almost suffocated by the embraces of the chief. My presence gave them courage to face the enemy again; a loud peculiar shrill whoop from the grey-headed but still robust chief was the signal for attack, and, bounding forward, they were soon out of sight. To keep up with them would have been an impossibility; but, marching at the top of our pace, we followed them as best we could. After a long march down a gentle declivity, at the bottom of which was a beautiful glade, we again came up with them drawn up in line, in pairs, some yards apart from each other, within the confines of the bush, not a sound indicating their presence.

"Joining them, and inquiring what had become of the enemy, the man whom I addressed silently pointed to the bush on the opposite side of the glade, some three hundred yards across. Notwithstanding my intention of being a mere spectator, I now felt myself compromised in the fight; and, although unwilling to shed blood, I could not resist my aid to the friends who afforded me an asylum amongst them. Marching, accordingly, into the open space with my force of four men, I resolved that we should act as skirmishers on the side of our hosts, who retained their position in the bush. We had proceeded about a third of the way across the glade, when the enemy advanced out of the wood and formed, in a long line of two or three deep, on its confines opposite to us. I also drew up my force, and for an instant we stood looking at each other. Although within range, at about two hundred yards' distance, I did not like to fire upon them; but in preference continued advancing, thinking the prestige of my fire-arms would be sufficient.

"I was right. We had scarcely marched fifty yards when a general flight took place, and in an instant Djau and his host, amounting to some three or four hundred men, passed in hot pursuit. After reflection on the rashness of exposing myself with so few men to the hostility of some six hundred negroes, and in self-congratulation on the effect my appearance in the fight had produced, I waited the return of my hosts. In the course of an hour this took place; and as they advanced I shall never forget the impression they made upon me. A more complete picture of savage life I could not have imagined. A large host of naked negroes came trooping on, grasping in their hands bow and arrow, lances and clubs, with wild gesticulations and frightful yells proclaiming their victory, whilst one displayed the reeking head of a victim. I refused to join them in following up the defeat of their enemies by a descent on their villages.

"With some difficulty they were persuaded to be content with the success already achieved—that of having beaten off a numerically superior force—and return to their homes. Their compliance was only obtained by an actual refusal of further co-operation; but in the event of a renewed attack upon their villages, the probability of which was suggested, I promised them my willing support."

The death of an enemy and the capture of his body are always causes of great rejoicing among the Dôr tribes, because they gain trophies whereby they show their skill in warfare. In the centre of every village there is a large open space, or circus, in the middle of which is the venerated war-tree. Beneath this tree are placed the great war-drums, whose deep, booming notes can be heard for miles. On the branches are hung the whitened skulls of slain warriors, and the war-drums only sound when a new head is added to the trophy, or when the warriors are called to arms.

Four of the enemy were killed in this skirmish, and their bodies were thrown into the bush, their heads being reserved for the trophy. On the same evening they were brought into the village circus, and dances performed in honour of the victors. The great drums were beaten in rhythmic measure, and the women advanced in pairs, dancing to the sound of the drum and chanting a war-song. As they approached the heads of the victims, they halted, and addressed various insulting epithets to them, clanking their iron anklets and yelling with excitement.

On the following day the heads were taken into the bush to be bleached, and, after they were completely whitened, they were hung on the trophy with the accompaniment of more shouts and dances.

All their hunting parties, however, are not conducted in this manner, nor do they all lead to bloodshed. When they hunt the elephant, for example, the animal is attacked

by a small party, and for the sufficient reason, namely, that he who first wounds the elephant takes the tusks, and therefore every additional man only decreases the chance.

They have one singularly ingenious mode of hunting the elephant, which is conducted by one man alone.

The hunter takes with him a remarkable spear made for the express purpose. One of these spears, which was brought from Central Africa by Mr. Petherick, is in my collection, and a representation of it may be seen on page 103, fig. 2. They vary slightly in size, but my specimen is a very fair example of the average dimensions. It is rather more than six feet in length, three feet of which are due to the iron head and the socket into which the shaft passes. As may be seen, the shaft tapers gradually, so as to permit it to pass into the socket. To the butt is fastened a heavy piece of wood, rather more than four inches in diameter. It is a heavy weapon, its whole weight being a little more than seven pounds, and is so ill-balanced and so unwieldy, that, unless its use were known, it would seem to be about the most clumsy weapon that ever was invented.

This, however, is the spear by which the Dôr and Baer tribes kill the elephant, and very ingeniously they do it.

Knowing the spots where the elephant loves to hide itself in the noon-tide, and which are always in the depths of the forest, the hunter proceeds thither in the early morning, and carries with him his heavy spear and some rope. When he approaches the place, he proceeds to take some large stones, and binds them to the butt of the spear, plastering them over thickly with lumps of clay, so as to make his heavy weapon still heavier. He then ties one end of the rope to the spear, and after selecting a suitable tree, climbs it, and works his way out upon one of the horizontal branches, hauling up his weapon when he has settled himself.

He now awaits the coming of the herd, and, when they are close to the tree, unties the spear, and holds it in readiness. When an elephant with good tusks passes under him, he drops the spear upon the animal's back, the weight of the weapon causing it to penetrate deeply into the body. Startled at the sudden pang, the elephant rushes through the trees, trying to shake off the terrible spear, which sways about from side to side, occasionally striking against the trunks or branches of the trees, and so cutting its way deeper among the vital organs, until the unfortunate animal falls from loss of blood.

The hunter does not trouble himself about chasing his victim at once. He can always track it by its bloody traces, and knows full well that within a moderate distance the unfortunate animal will halt, and there die, unless it is disturbed by the presence of man, and urged to further exertions.

The reader will note the curious similarity between this mode of elephant hunting and the Banyai method of trapping the hippopotamus, as described on page 401. The Dôr also use lances, at least eleven feet long, for elephant hunting, the blades measuring between two and three feet in length. These, however, are not dropped from a tree, but wielded by hand, the hunters surrounding the animal, and each watching his opportunity, and driving his spear into its side when its attention is directed towards some on the other side.

The Dôr hold in great contempt the perfect nudity which distinguishes the Kytch and several other tribes, but no one on first entering their villages would suppose such to be the case. The dress which the men wear is simply a little flap of leather hanging behind them. This, however, in their ideas constitutes dress; and when some of the Djour people entered a Dôr village, the latter, as a mark of respect to the visitors, turned their little aprons to the front, and so were considered as having put on full dress.

The women use a still simpler dress. Until they are married, they wear no dress at all; but when that event takes place, they clothe themselves in a very simple manner. In their country is an abundance of evergreens and creepers, and with these they form their dress, a branch tucked into the girdle in front, and another behind, answering all purposes of clothing. They use these leafy dresses of such a length that they fall nearly to the ground.

Ornaments, however, they admire exceedingly, and the weight of a Dôr woman's decorations is more than an ordinary man would like to carry about with him for a

whole day. Heavy strings of beads are hung on their necks and tied round their waists, the most valued beads being as large as pigeon's eggs, and consequently very heavy. Strings of beads also fall from their ears. On their wrists they wear bracelets, made simply of iron bars cut to the proper length, and bent round the wrist. Others, but of greater dimensions, encircle the ankles; and as some of them are fully an inch thick, and quite solid, their united weight is very considerable.

Like most African tribes, the Dôr are fond of wearing amulets, though they do not seem to have any particular idea of their meaning, and certainly do not attach any sanctity to them. They have a hazy idea that the possession of a certain amulet is a safeguard against certain dangers, but they do not trouble themselves about the *modus operandi*. One of these necklaces, made of scraps of wood, is shown in the accompanying illustration. It was brought from Central Africa by Mr. Petherick, and is in the collection of Colonel Lane Fox.

In this tribe we may notice the re-appearance of the lip ornament. In the manner in which it is worn it resembles the "pelele" described on page 395, but it is worn in the under instead of the upper lip. One of these ornaments is now before me. It is cylindrical, with a conical top, and measures three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and exactly an inch in length. The base, which comes against the lower teeth and gum, is nearly flat, and well polished, while the conical top, which projects in front of the mouth, is carved very neatly with a "cross-hatching" sort of a pattern, the effect of which is heightened by the charring of certain portions of it, the blackened and polished surfaces contrasting well with the deep red colour of the wood. In order to keep it in its place, a shallow groove runs round it. This is one of the smaller specimens, but it is the custom of the owner to wear larger and larger lip ornaments, until some of them contrive to force into their lips pieces of wood three inches in circumference.

Before taking leave of the Dôr costume, it may be as well to observe that in the Botocondo tribe of Tropical America both sexes wear a similar ornament in their lips, and in most instances have these strange decorations twice as large as those of the Dôr women.

The villages of the Dôr tribes are really remarkable. The houses are neatly constructed of canes woven into a sort of basket-work. The perpendicular walls are about six feet high, and are covered by a conical roof, the whole shape of the hut being almost exactly like that of the lip ornament which has just been described. The reed roof is ornamented on the exterior with pieces of wood carved into the rude semblance of birds.

In the middle of each hut is the bedstead, and, as no cooking is done within it, the interior of the hut is very clean, and in that respect entirely unlike the sooty homes of the Kaffir tribes. All the cooking is performed in a separate hut, or kitchen, and is of a rather simple character, the chief food being a kind of porridge.

The doorway is very small, and is barricaded at night by several logs of wood laid horizontally upon each other, and supported at each end by two posts driven into the ground. The whole village is kept as clean as the individual houses, and the central circus is not only swept, but kept well watered, so as to lay the dust.

The most singular point in the Dôr village lies in the approaches to it, which are narrow footpaths, marked out on each side by wooden posts roughly carved into the human form. They are placed about four feet apart, and are different in size. The one nearest



AMULET NECKLACE

the village is the largest, while the others are much smaller, and are represented as carrying bowls on their heads. The natives say that the first is the chief going to a feast, and that the others are his attendants carrying food on their heads.

Several of these wooden figures were brought to England by Mr. Petherick, and two of the chiefs are here represented, the one on the left being drawn from a specimen in Colonel Lane Fox's collection, and that on the right from a figure kindly lent by Mr. Wareham. They are about four feet in length. It may be imagined that a double row of such figures must give a most curious aspect to the road.



WOODEN CHIEFS

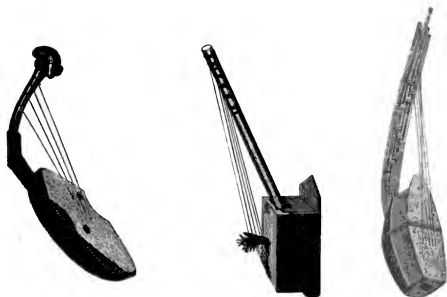
"The village," writes Mr. Petherick, "was prettily situated at the foot of a hill, around which were two or three other villages, this forming the entire community of a large district. From its summit a beautiful view of the surrounding country was obtained. Surrounding the village at a moderate distance were the unfenced gardens of the villagers, in which cucurbits, vegetables, and seeds were grown; and beyond, to the eastward, was a large plain of cultivated dourra fields; and southward, at about a mile distant, a winding brook was to be seen, bordered with superb trees and flourishing canes. The bush supplied a variety of game, consisting of partridges, guinea-fowl, a large white boar, gazelles, antelopes, and giraffes. Elephants and buffaloes I did not encounter, and I was told that they only frequented the locality in the rainy season."

Three forms of the guitar, or rababa, are shown in the illustration on page 501. The left-hand specimen, which was brought by Mr. Petherick from the Dôr tribe, is remarkable for the elegance of its form, the two scoops in the sides being curiously like the same portion of a European violin. The reader will probably observe that in neither instrument is the neck rigid, as in the guitars and violins with which we are all familiar. This is, however, intentional on the part of the maker, its object being to keep the strings at a proper tension.

This principle is carried out to its fullest extent in the right-hand instrument, in which there are five strings, each string having its separate elastic neck. The mode in which it is tuned is equally simple and effective. A ring, mostly made of the same fibre as the strings, is passed over each neck, so that, as it is slipped up or down, the sound becomes proportionately grave or acute. It can be thus tuned with reasonable accuracy, as I can testify by experience, the only drawback being that the notes cannot be altered by pressure of the fingers upon the strings, on account of the angle which they make with the neck. Five sounds only can be produced by this instrument, but it is worthy of notice that one string is very much longer than the others, so that it produces a deep tone, analogous to the "drone" in the bagpipes.

Although tolerably well-mannered to travellers with whom they were acquainted, the Dôr are very apt to behave badly to those whom they do not know. Mr. Petherick nearly lost his life by a sudden and treacherous attack that was made on him by some of this tribe. Accompanied by the friendly chief, Djau, he went to a village, and began to purchase ivory. In spite of Djau's presence the people were suspicious, and became more and more insolent, asking higher prices for every tusk, and at last trying to run off with a tusk and the beads that had been offered in payment for it.

The tusk was regained, whereupon a sudden attack was made, and a lance hurled at Mr. Petherick, whom it missed, but struck one of his men in the shoulder. Three more were wounded by a volley of spears, and there was nothing for it but to fire. One of the assailants having been wounded in the leg, firing was stopped. On going for their donkey, who had been brought to carry back the tusks, he was found lying dead, having been killed by the vengeful Dôr.



GUITARS.

Hereupon Djan recommended that the village should be sacked as a warning, which was done, and the spoil carried home. Next day the chief of the village came very humbly to apologise, bringing some tusks as an equivalent for the donkey, and as a proof of goodwill for the future. So the tusks were accepted, the plunder of the village restored, and harmony was thus established, a supplementary present of beads being added as a seal to the bargain.

THE DJOUR.

THE Djour tribe afford a remarkable instance of the influence which is exercised over man by the peculiarities of the country in which he is placed. Surrounded by pastoral tribes, which breed cattle and trouble themselves but little about the cultivation of the ground, the Djour are agriculturists, and have no cattle except goats. The sole reason for this fact is, that the dread tsetse-fly is abundant in the land of Djour, and consequently neither horse nor ox has a chance of life. This terrible insect, harmless to man and to most animals, is certain death to the horse, dog, and ox tribe.

It is very little larger than the horse-fly, and its only weapons are a kind of lancet, which projects from its mouth, as one may see in the gad-fly. Like the gad-fly, the tsetse only causes a temporary irritation when it bites a human being, and the strangest thing is that it does no harm to calves until they are weaned. It does not sting, but, like the gnat, inserts its sharp proboscis into the skin for the purpose of sucking the blood. After an ox has been bitten, it loses condition, the coat starts, the muscles become flaccid, and in a short time the animal dies, even the muscle of the heart having become so soft that, when pinched, the fingers can be made to meet through it.

Yet the mule, ass, and goat enjoy a perfect immunity from this pest, and consequently the only domesticated animal among the Djour is the goat. The tsetse is a singularly local insect. It will swarm along one bank of a river, and the other bank be free; or it will inhabit little hills, or perhaps a patch of soil on level ground. Tsetse-haunted places are well known to the natives, and it has often happened that, when a herd of oxen has been driven through one of these dreaded spots, not a single animal has escaped.

Being deprived of cattle, the Djour do not depend wholly upon agriculture, but are admirable workers in iron, and by them are made many of the weapons and polished iron ornaments which are so much in request throughout Central Africa. Iron ore is abundant in their country, and, after they have finished getting in their crops, the industrious Djour set to work at their metallurgy, at which every man is more or less an adept. After procuring a sufficient quantity of ore, they proceed to smelt it in furnaces very ingeniously built.

"The cupolas are constructed of stiff clay, one foot thick, increasing towards the bottom to about fourteen inches in diameter, and four feet in height. Underneath is a small basin for the reception of the metal, and on a level with the surface are four apertures, opposite each other, for the reception of the blast pipes. These are made of burnt clay, and are attached to earthen vessels about eighteen inches in diameter and six inches in height, covered with a loose dressed goat-skin tied tightly over them, and



ORNAMENTS.

perforated with a few small holes. In the centre there is a loop to contain the fingers of the operator. A lad, sitting between two of these vessels, by a rapid alternate vertical motion with each hand drives a current of air into the furnace, which, charged with alternate layers of ore and charcoal, nourished by eight of these rude bellows, emits a flame some eighteen inches in height at the top.

"Relays of boys keep up a continual blast, and, when the basin for the reception of the metal is nearly full, the charging of the furnace is discontinued, and it is blown out. Through an aperture at the bottom the greater part of the slag is withdrawn, and the temperature of the furnace not being sufficient to reduce the metal to the fluid state, it is mixed up with a quantity of impurities, and broken, when still warm, into small pieces. These are subsequently submitted to the heat of a smith's hearth, and hammered with a huge granite boulder on a small anvil, presenting a surface of one and a half inches square, struck into an immense block of wood.

"By this method the metal is freed from its impurities, and converted into malleable iron of the best quality. The slag undergoes the operations of crushing and washing, and the small globules of iron contained in it are obtained. A crucible charged with them is exposed to welding heat on the hearth, and its contents are welded and purified as above.

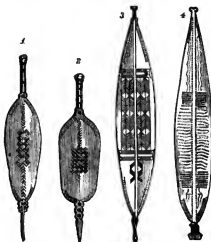
"The iron being reduced to small malleable ingots, the manufacture of lances, hoes, hatchets, &c. is proceeded with. These are beaten into shape by the boulder wielded by a powerful man; and the master smith with a hammer, handleless, like the pestle of a mortar, finishes them. With these rude implements, the proficiency they have attained is truly astonishing, many lances and other articles of their manufacture which I now possess having been pronounced good specimens of workmanship for an ordinary English smith."

In the illustration on page 502 examples are seen of the workmanship of the Djour tribe. The remarkable ornament with a long hook is an armlet, the hooked portion being passed over the arm, and then bent, so as to retain its hold. The other two ornaments are entirely iron, and are either worn by themselves, or sold to the Dinka and other neighbouring tribes for food. The four singular objects in the accompanying illustration are women's knives, and are good examples of the patient skill displayed by the Djour tribe with such very imperfect tools.

These and other products of their ingenuity are dispersed throughout several of the tribes of Central Africa, many of them being recognised as currency, just as is the English sovereign on the Continent. As if to illustrate the truth of the proverb,

that men are always longing for that which they do not possess, the Djour are always hankering after beef, and in consequence buy cattle largely from their warlike neighbours, the Dinka tribe. The tsetse prevents the Djour from keeping the cattle just purchased, and so they only buy them in order to kill and eat them at once.

Owing to this traffic, the Djour are recognised as the chief smiths of Central Africa, and they can always find a market for their wares. Consequently, they are a very prosperous tribe, as even the Dinkas would not wish to destroy a people from whom they procure the very weapons with which they fight; and there is not a Djour man who cannot with ordinary industry earn enough for the purchase and maintenance of a wife as soon as he is old enough to take one. Among themselves they do not care particularly



WOMEN'S KNIVES.

about wearing as ornaments the products of their own skill, but prize beads above every other personal decoration; and so far do they carry this predilection, that their wives are purchased with beads, and not with goats—the only cattle which they can breed. There is scarcely a Djour of full age who has not a wife, if not in fact, yet in view; and so brisk is the matrimonial market, that there is not a girl in the country above eight years of age who has not been purchased by some one as a wife.

Tobacco is as dear to the Djour as to other African tribes, and they are fond of smoking it in pipes of very great capacity. They have a rather odd mode of managing their pipes. The bowl is of reddish clay, worked on the outside into a kind of pattern like that in frosted glass. The stem is of bamboo, and is very thick, and the junction between the stem and the bowl is made tolerably air-tight by binding a piece of raw hide round it. A long and narrow gourd forms the mouthpiece, and round it is wrapped a piece of leather like that which fastens the bowl to the stem. Lest the mouthpiece should fall off, a string is passed round it, and the other end fastened to the lower end of the stem.

When the pipe is used, a quantity of fine bark-fibres are rolled up into little balls, and, the gourd mouthpiece being removed, they are thrust into it and into the stem, so that, when the pipe is lighted, they may become saturated with tobacco oil. This fibre is not inserted for the purpose of purifying the smoke, for the tobacco oil is thought to be much too valuable an article to be wasted, and the fibre balls, when thoroughly saturated, are taken out and chewed as if they were the best pigtail tobacco.

It is thought to be a delicate attention for two friends to exchange "quids" from each other's pipe, and when one person has obtained as much tobacco oil as he cares for, he passes the quid to another, and so on, until the flavour has all been extracted. The accompanying illustration represents one of these pipes, kindly lent by Mr. Wareham. It is two feet in length, and the bowl is capable of holding a large handful of tobacco.

Pipes of this description, though differing slightly in details, prevail through the whole of Central Africa, and especially along the east bank of the Nile. In the splendid collection gathered by Mr. Petherick, and exhibited in London in 1862, more than twenty such pipes were exhibited, several with horn stems, some mounted with iron, and in one or two the bark "quids" were still in their places. The specimen described above belonged to the collection.



PIPE (from Mr. Petherick's collection).

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE LATOOKA TRIBE.

THEIR LIVELY AND PLEASANT DISPOSITION—SINGULAR HEAD-DRESS—WEAPONS—THE ARMED BRACE-
LET AND ITS USE—LATOOKA WOMEN AND THEIR DRESS—THE CURIOUS LIP ORNAMENT—
BOKKÈ AND HER DAUGHTER—WEALTH OF THE LATOOKAS—INGENIOUS STRUCTURE OF THE
VILLAGES—TARRANOOLLÈ, THE CAPITAL OF LATOOKA—CONDITION OF THE WOMEN—BOKKÈ
AND THE SOLDIER—MODE OF GOVERNMENT—ABSENCE OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS—SKILL AT THE
FORGE—THE MOLOTE, OR IRON HOE—FONDNESS FOR CATTLE—REPULSE OF A RAID, AND A
LATOOKA VICTORY—THE DRUM SIGNALS—FUNERAL CEREMONIES—THE STRANGE DANCES—
LATOOKA BELLS.

THE Latooka tribe inhabit a tract of country on the east of the Nile, lat. 40° N. Equally warlike when war is needed, they are not the morose, inhospitable set of savages we have seen some of their neighbours to be, but are merry, jocose, and always ready either for fighting, laughing, or playing.

The dress of the Latookas is at once simple and complicated. The men wear but little dress upon their bodies, but bestow a wonderful amount of attention upon their heads, the proper tiring of which is so long a process, that a man cannot hope to dress his head perfectly until he has arrived at full age. Indeed, from the time that a Latooka begins to dress his head, at least seven or eight years must elapse before his toilet is completed. The following account, given by Sir S. Baker, affords an excellent idea of the Latooka head-dress.

"However tedious the operation, the result is extraordinary. The Latookas wear most exquisite helmets: all of them are formed of their own hair, and are of course fixtures. At first sight it appears incredible, but a minute examination shows the wonderful perseverance of years in producing what must be highly inconvenient.

"The thick, crisp wool is woven with fine twine, formed from the bark of a tree, until it presents a thick net-work of felt. As the hair grows through this matted substance, it is subjected to the same process, until, in the course of years, a compact substance is formed, like a strong felt, about an inch and a half thick, that has been trained into the shape of a helmet. A strong rim, of about two inches deep, is formed by sewing it together with thread; and the front part of the helmet is protected by a piece of polished copper; while a plate of the same metal, shaped like the half of a bishop's mitre, and about a foot in length, forms the crest.

"The framework of the helmet being at length completed, it must be perfected by an arrangement of beads, should the owner be sufficiently rich to indulge in the coveted distinction. The beads most in fashion are the red and the blue porcelain, about the size of small peas. These are sewn on the nape of the felt, and so beautifully arranged in sections of blue and red, that the entire helmet appears to be formed of beads; and the handsome crest of polished copper, surmounted by ostrich plumes, gives a most dignified

and martial appearance to this elaborate head-gear. No helmet is supposed to be complete without a row of cowrie shells stitched round the rim, so as to form a solid edge."

Necklaces of metal are also worn by the men, and also bracelets of the same material. Each warrior carries in addition a most remarkable bracelet on his right wrist. This is a ring of iron, round which are set four or five knife-blades with points and edges scrupulously kept sharp. With this instrument they can strike terrible blows, and if in action the spear is dropped, the wearer instantly closes with his enemy, and strikes at him with his armel bracelet. The other weapons of the Latooka tribe are a strong lance, or a short mace, mostly made of iron, and a shield about four feet long, by two wide. The shields are generally made of buffalo hide, but the best are formed from the skin of the giraffe, this combining the two qualities of lightness and toughness. Bows and arrows are not used by the Latookas.

The women take comparatively little pains with their toilet. Instead of spending their time in working up their woolly hair into the felt-like mass which decorates the men, they shave their heads entirely, and trust for their ornaments to beads, paint, and tattooing. Like the belles of more southern tribes, the Latooka women extract the four incisor teeth of the lower jaw; and the favourite wife of the king told Lady Baker that she would really not be bad-looking if she would only remove those teeth, and give herself a coat of grease and vermilion.

Bokkè, the queen in question, with her daughter, were the only good-looking women that were seen in that country; the females being strangely large, coarse, and powerful. On bodily strength they pride themselves, and each woman makes it a daily task to carry on her head a ten-gallon jar to the water, fill it, and bring it back again, the distance being seldom less than a mile. Their dress is rather remarkable. It consists of a leathern belt, to which is attached a large flap of tanned leather in front, while to the back are tied a number of thongs, two feet or more in length, which look at a distance exactly like a horse's tail.

The most fashionable feminine ornament in the Latooka country is a long piece of polished crystal, about as thick as a drawing-pencil. A hole is bored in the under lip, and the ornament hung from it. Sir S. Baker commended himself greatly to Bokkè and her daughter by presenting them with the glass stem of a thermometer that had been accidentally broken, and his gift was valued much as a necklace of brilliants would be by European ladies. In order to prevent this ornament from falling, a piece of twine is knotted upon the end that passes through the lip. As the lower teeth are removed, the tongue of course acts upon it, and when a lady is speaking the movements of the tongue cause the crystal pendant to move about in a very ludicrous manner. Tattooing is mostly confined to the cheeks and forehead, and consists chiefly of lines.

The men are also fond of decorating their heads with the feathers of various birds, and the favourite ornament is the head of the crested crane, its black, velvet-like plumage, tipped with the gold-coloured crest, having a very handsome appearance when fixed on the top of the head.

When Sir S. Baker was encamping among the Latookas, he could not purchase either goats or cows, though large herds were being driven before him, and he was therefore forced to depend much on his gun for subsistence. The feathers of the cranes, ducks, geese, and other birds were thrown over the palisade of his encampment, and, during the whole time of his visit, the boys were to be seen with their heads comically dressed with white feathers, until they looked like huge canniblers. The longest feathers were in greatest request, and were taken as perquisites by the boys who volunteered to accompany the sportsman, to carry home the game which he shot, and then to pluck the birds.

In general appearance, the Latookas are a singularly fine race of men. They are, on an average, all but six feet in height, and, although they are exceedingly muscular and powerful, they do not degenerate into corpulency nor unwieldiness. The expression of the countenance is pleasing, and the lips, although large, are not of the negro type. The forehead is high, the cheek-bones rather prominent, and the eyes large. It is thought that their origin must have been derived from some of the Galla tribes.

The Latookas are rich as well as powerful, and have great herds of cattle, which they keep in stockades, constructed after a most ingenious fashion; as many as ten or twelve thousand head of cattle being often herded in one town. Knowing that there are plenty of hostile tribes, who would seize every opportunity of stealing their cows, the Latookas always pen them in very strong stockades, the entrance to which is only a yard, or thereabouts, in width. These entrances are arch-shaped, and only just wide enough to allow an ox to pass through, and from the top of each arch is hung a rude kind of cattle-bell, formed from the shell of the *dolapè* palm-nut, against which the animal must strike as it passes in or out of the stockade.

The path which leads from the entrances is no wider than the door itself, and is flanked at either side by a high and strong palisade, so that, if an enemy were to attack the place, they could hardly force their way along passages which a few men could guard as effectually as a multitude. Through the village runs a tolerably wide street, and into the street open the larger entrances into the cattle enclosures, so that, if the inhabitants desired, they could either remove their oxen singly by the small doors, or drive them out in herds through the gates that open into the central street.

Thus it will be seen that the aspect of a Latooka town is very remarkable. It is surrounded by a very strong palisade, in which are several doorways. Through the centre of the village runs the main street, upon which all the cattle-pens open, and the rest of the interior is traversed by lanes, so narrow that only one cow can pass at a time. The various gates and doors of the village are closed at night, and carefully barred with branches of the thorny *mimosa*.

Sometimes these villages are so large as to deserve the name of towns. Tarrangollé, the capital of the Latookas, comprised at least three thousand homesteads; and not only was the whole town surrounded by a strong iron-wood palisading, but each homestead was fortified in like manner.

The wives of the Latookas seem tolerably well off in comparison with their married sisters of other tribes. They certainly work hard, and carry ponderous weights, but then they are so tall and strong, that such labour is no very great hardship to them. That they are not down-trodden, as women are in too many parts of Africa, is evident from the way in which they comport themselves. On one occasion one of the armed soldiers belonging to the Turkish caravan met a woman, who was returning from the water with her heavy jar on her head. He demanded the water, and, when she refused to give it him, threatened her with his stick. Bokkè, the pretty wife of Commoro, seeing this proceeding, went to the rescue, seized the soldier by the throat, and wrested his stick from him, while another woman twisted his gun out of his hand. Several other women came running to the spot, threw the man down, and administered a sound pummeling, while others poured water down the muzzle of his gun, and plastered great lumps of wet mud over the lock and trigger.

Wives are purchased in Latooka-land for cows, and therefore a large family is a sure step to prosperity: the boys becoming warriors, who will fight for their tribe; and the girls being always saleable for cows, should they live to womanhood. Every girl is sure of being married, because, when a man begins to procure wealth, the first thing that he does is to buy a wife, and he adds to their number as fast as he can muster cows enough to pay for them.

When Sir S. Baker passed through the country, the great chief of the Latookas was named Moy. He had a brother, named Commoro, and, although in actual rank Moy took precedence of his brother, Commoro was virtually the king, having far more influence over the people than his brother.

Commoro was really deserving of this influence, and was remarkable for his acuteness and strong common sense. Without his exertions the Latookas would certainly have assaulted the caravan, and great slaughter must have ensued, the natives having learned to despise guns on account of a victory which they had lately gained over a party of slave-stealers. He had a long argument with his visitor respecting the immortality of the soul, and resurrection after death, but could in no way be convinced that a man could live after death. Had he had even any superstitious feelings, something might have been

done with him, but, like many other sceptics, he flatly refused to believe anything which was without the range of his senses.

The familiar illustration of the grain of corn planted in the earth was used, but without effect. He was quite willing that the grain in question should represent himself, but controverted the conclusion which was drawn from the premisses. The ears of corn filled with grains, which would spring up after the decay of the original seed, were not,



THE LATOOKA VICTORY.

he said, representatives of himself, but were his children, who lived after he was dead. The ingenuity with which he slipped out of the argument was very considerable, and, as Sir S. Baker remarks, "it was extraordinary to see so much clearness of perception combined with such complete obtuseness to anything ideal."

The Latookas are very good blacksmiths, and excel in the manufacture of iron hoe-blades, or "molotes," as they are called. This instrument is also used as money: a figure of a molote may be seen on page 475. The bellows are made on the same principle as those used by the Kaffir tribes, but, instead of using merely a couple of leather bags, the Latooka blacksmith employs two earthenware pots, and over the mouth of each pot is loosely tied a large piece of soft, pliable leather, kept well greased to insure its softness.

A perpendicular stick, about four feet in length, is fastened to the centre of each skin, and, when these are worked rapidly up and down, the wind is forced through earthenware tubes which communicate with the bottom of the pots.

The tools are very simple, a large stone doing duty for an anvil, and a smaller for a hammer, while a cleft stick of green wood is used by way of pincers. Great care is taken in shaping the molotes, which are always carefully tested by balancing them on their heads, and making them ring by a blow of the finger.

When used for agriculture, the molotes are fastened to the end of wooden shafts, seldom less than seven, and often ten, feet in length, and thus a powerful leverage is gained.

Although the Latooka is generally ready for war, he is not a born warrior, as is the case with many tribes. The Zulu, for example, lives chiefly for war; he thinks of it day and night, and his great ambition is to distinguish himself in battle. The Latooka, on the other hand, seldom wages war without a cause which he is pleased to think a good one; but, when he does, he fights well.

The chief cause for which a Latooka will fight to the death is his cattle. He will sometimes run away when a powerful party makes a raid on his village, and carries off his wives and children for slaves; but if they attempt to drive off his cattle, the spirit of the noble savage is set a-blaze, and he is at once up in arms.

A curious example of this trait of character occurred during Sir S. Baker's residence in Latooka-land. One of the Mahometan traders (who, it will be remembered, are the very pest and scourge of the country) gathered together a band of three hundred natives, and more than a hundred of his own countrymen, for the purpose of making a raid upon a certain village among the mountains. The men ran away, and the invaders captured a great number of women and children, with whom they might have escaped unmolested. Unfortunately for them, they were told of a large herd of cattle which they had missed, and accordingly returned, and began to drive off their spoil.

The Latookas had witnessed the capture of their wives and children without attempting a rescue, but the attack on their beloved cattle was too much for them, and they poured out of their hiding-places like a swarm of angry wasps. Maddened with the idea of losing their cattle, they bravely faced the muskets with their spears and shields, and clustered round the invaders in resistless numbers. Each man, as he advanced, leaped behind some cover, from which he could hurl a lance, while others climbed up the rocks, and rolled great stones on their enemies. The attack was so sudden and simultaneous, that the Turks found themselves beset on all sides, and yet could hardly see a man at whom they could aim.

They fled in terror down the path, and, mistaking in their haste the right road, they turned aside to one which led to a precipice five hundred feet in depth. Seeing their danger, they tried to retreat, but the ever-increasing multitudes pressed closer and closer upon them, forced them nearer to the precipice, and at last drove them all over it. Not a man escaped, and although a few turned and fought with the courage of despair, they were hurled over the precipice after their comrades.

This was the victory over fire-arms which had inspired the Latookas with such contempt for these weapons, and had it not been for Commoro's mediation, they would have attacked the English party. That subtle chief, however, well knew the difference between assailing an assemblage of Turks and Africans among the rocky passes and attacking in the open country a well-armed party commanded by Europeans. Such an attack was once meditated, and Sir Samuel Baker's account of it gives an excellent idea of the Latooka mode of warfare. The reader must remember that the war-drum is an institution throughout the greater part of Central Africa.

"It was about five P.M., one hour before sunset. The woman who usually brought us water delivered her jar, but disappeared immediately after, without sweeping the courtyard, as was her custom. Her children, who usually played in this enclosure, vanished. On searching her hut, which was in one corner of the yard, no one was to be found, and even the grinding-stone was gone. Suspecting that something was in the wind, I sent Karka and Gaddum-Her, the two black servants, to search in various huts in the neigh-

bourhood, to observe whether the owners were present, and whether the women were in their houses. Not a woman could be found. Neither woman nor child remained in the large town of Tarrangollé. There was an extraordinary stillness, where usually all was noise and chattering. All the women and children had been removed to the mountains, about two miles distant, and this so quickly and noiselessly that it appeared incredible."

Commoro and Moy were then sent for, and said that the Turks had behaved so badly, by robbing and beating the women, that the people were much excited, and would endure it no longer; and, not being accustomed to any travellers except slave-dealers, they naturally included Sir S. Baker's party in that category. Commoro, however, took his leave, saying that he would do his best to quiet the people.

"The sun set, and, as is usual in tropical climates, darkness set in within half an hour. Not a woman had returned to the town, nor was the voice of a man to be heard. The natives had entirely forsaken the portion of the town that both I and the Turks occupied.

"There was a death-like stillness in the air. Even the Turks, who were usually uproarious, were perfectly quiet; and, although my men made no remark, it was plain that we were all occupied by the same thoughts, and that an attack was expected.

"It was about nine o'clock, and the stillness had become almost painful. There was no cry of a bird; not even the howl of a hyæna: the camels were sleeping; but every man was wide awake, and the sentries well on the alert. We were almost listening to the supernatural stillness, if I may so describe the perfect calm, when suddenly every one startled at the deep and solemn boom of the great war-drum, or nogara! Three distinct beats, at slow intervals, rang through the apparently deserted town, and echoed loudly from the neighbouring mountain. It was the signal! A few minutes elapsed, and, like a distant echo from the north, the three mournful notes again distinctly sounded. Was it an echo? Impossible!

"Now from the south, far distant, but unmistakable, the same three regular beats came booming through the still night air. Again and again, from every quarter, spreading far and wide, the signal was responded to, and the whole country echoed these three solemn notes so full of warning. Once more the great nogara of Tarrangollé sounded the original alarm within a few hundred paces of our quarters. The whole country was up. There was no doubt about the matter. The Turks well knew those three notes to be the war-signal of the Latookas. . . .

"The patrols shortly reported that large bodies of men were collecting outside the town. The great nogara again beat, and was answered, as before, from the neighbouring villages; but the Turks' drum kept up an uninterrupted roll, as a challenge, whenever the nogara sounded. Instead of the intense stillness, that had formerly been almost painful, a distinct hum of voices betokened the gathering of large bodies of men. However, we were well fortified, and the Latookas knew it. We occupied the very stronghold which they themselves had constructed for the defence of their town; and the square, being surrounded with strong iron-wood palisades, with only a narrow entrance, would be impregnable when held, as now, by fifty men well armed against a mob whose best weapons were only lances.

"I sent men up the watchmen's stations. These were about twenty-five feet high; and, the night being clear, they could distinctly report the movements of a large mass of natives that were ever increasing on the outside of the town, at about two hundred yards distance. The rattle of the Turks' drum repeatedly sounded in reply to the nogara, and the intended attack seemed destined to relapse into a noisy but empty battle of the drums."

Towards midnight Commoro came in person, and said that the nogara had been beaten without his orders, and that he would try to quiet the people. He admitted, however, that, if the exploring party had not been on their guard, an attack would really have been made. After this business, Sir Samuel very wisely determined to separate entirely from the Turks, and therefore built himself a camp about a quarter of a mile from the town, so that the Latookas might not again think that the two parties had a common interest.

On the following morning the women appeared with their water-jars as usual, and

the men, though still excited, and under arms, returned to their homes. By degrees the excitement died away, and then they talked over the affair with perfect frankness, admitting that an attack was meditated, and rather amused that the intended victims should have been aware of their plans.

The Latookas are not free from the vice of thieving, and, when employed as porters, have exercised their craft with so little attempt at concealment, that they have deliberately broken open the parcels which they carried, not taking any notice of the fact that a sentry was watching them within a few yards. Also they would occasionally watch an opportunity, slip aside from the caravan, and sneak away with their loads.

Funeral ceremonies differ among the Latookas according to the mode of death. If a man is killed in battle, the body is not touched, but is allowed to remain on the spot where it fell, to be eaten by the hyænas and the vultures. But should a Latooka, whether man, woman, or child, die a natural death, the body is disposed of in a rather singular manner.

Immediately after death, a shallow grave is dug in the enclosure that surrounds each house, and within a few feet of the door. It is allowed to remain there for several weeks, when decomposition is usually completed. It is then dug up, the bones are cleaned and washed, and are then placed in an earthenware jar, and carried about a quarter of a mile outside the village.

No particular sanctity attaches itself either to the bones or the spot on which they are deposited. The earthen jars are broken in course of time, and the bones scattered about, but no one takes any notice of them. In consequence of this custom the neighbourhood of a large town presents a most singular and rather dismal aspect, the ground being covered with bones, skulls, and earthenware jars in various states of preservation; and indeed, the traveller always knows when he is approaching a Latooka town by coming across a quantity of neglected human remains.

The Latookas have not the least idea why they treat their dead in this singular manner, nor why they make so strange a distinction between the bodies of warriors who have died the death of the brave and those who have simply died from disease, accident, or decay. Perhaps there is no other country where the body of the dead warrior is left to the beasts and birds, while those who die natural deaths are so elaborately buried, exhumed, and placed in the public cemetery. Why they do so they do not seem either to know or to care, and, as far as has been ascertained, this is one of the many customs which has survived long after those who practise it have forgotten its signification.

During the three or four weeks that elapse between the interment and exhumation of the body funeral dances are performed. Great numbers of both sexes take part in this dance, for which they decorate themselves in a very singular manner. Their hair-helmets are supplemented by great plumes of ostrich-feathers, each man wearing as many as he can manage to fasten on his head, and skins of the leopard or monkey are hung from their shoulders. The chief adornment, however, is a large iron bell, which is fastened to the small of the back, and which is sounded by wriggling the body after a very ludicrous fashion.

"A large crowd got up in this style created an indescribable hubbub, heightened by the blowing of horns and the beating of seven *nogaras* of various notes. Every dancer wore an antelope's horn suspended round the neck, which he blew occasionally in the height of his excitement. These instruments produced a sound partaking of the braying of a donkey and the screech of an owl. Crowds of men rushed round and round in a sort of *galop infernel*, brandishing their arms and iron-headed maces, and keeping tolerably in line five or six deep, following the leader, who headed them, dancing backwards.

"The women kept outside the line, dancing a slow, stupid step, while a long string of young girls and small children, their heads and necks rubbed with red ochre and grease, and prettily ornamented with strings of beads round their loins, kept a very good line, beating time with their feet, and jingling the numerous iron rings which adorned their ankles, to keep time to the drums.

"One woman attended upon the men, running through the crowd with a gourd full of

wood-ashes, handfuls of which she showered over their heads, powdering them like millers; the object of the operation I could not understand. The *première danseuse* was immensely fat; she had passed the bloom of youth, but, *malgré* her unwieldy state, she kept up the pace to the last, quite unconscious of her general appearance, and absorbed with the excitement of the dance."

These strange dances form a part of every funeral, and so, when several persons have died successively, the funeral dances go on for several months together. The chief Commoro was remarkable for his agility in the funeral dances, and took his part in every such ceremony, no matter whether it were for a wealthy or a poor man, every one who dies being equally entitled to the funeral-dance, without any distinction of rank or wealth.



FUNERAL DANCE

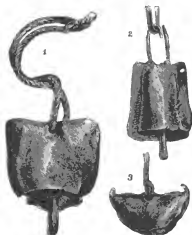
The bells which are so often mentioned in those tribes inhabiting Central Africa are mostly made on one principle, though not on precisely the same pattern. These simple bells evidently derive their origin from the shells of certain nuts, or other hard fruits, which, when suspended, and a wooden clapper hung within them, can produce a sound of some resonance. The curious rattle which is figured on page 398 is made on this principle, and consists of a number of nutshells, shaped like those of the Brazil-nut, emptied of their contents, and carefully polished. Although they have no clappers, these shells make a very loud noise when the rattle is shaken.

The next advance is evidently the carving the bell out of some hard wood, so as to increase its size and add to the power of its sound. Next, the superior resonance of iron became apparent, and little bells were made, shaped exactly like the before-mentioned

nuts. This point once obtained, the variety in the shape of the bells is evidently a mere matter of caprice on the part of the maker.

The accompanying illustration shows three of the most strongly-marked stages in the construction of these iron bells. Fig. 3 is a small bell, made in exact imitation of the above-mentioned rattle, and is drawn to its proper dimensions. It imitates the shape of the nutshell with wonderful fidelity, considering the rude tools of the artist who made it. Fig. 1 is a much larger article, used chiefly as a cow-bell. As the reader may see, this instrument is formed on precisely the same principle as that shown at fig. 3, and only differs from it in its superior size, and in the fact that its length is greater than its width.

In fig. 2 is seen an instrument which approaches nearer to our familiar type of bell than any other, and really bears a very close resemblance to the strangely-shaped bells of Siam or Burmah. Instead of being flattened, as are the others, it is tolerably wide, and is so formed that a transverse section of it would give the figure of a quatrefoil. These bells are drawn from specimens in Colonel Lane Fox's collection, and are part of a series wherein the bell is traced from its primitive to its perfected form.



IRON BELLS

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE SHIR, BARI, DJIBBA, NUEHR, DINKA, AND SHILLOOK TRIBES.

LOCALITY OF THE SHIR TRIBE—THEIR PORTABLE PROPERTY—DRESS AND GENERAL APPEARANCE—A STRANGE STORY—BASKET-MAKING—THE BARI TRIBE AND THEIR CHARACTER—SLAVE-DEALING—BARI ARCHERS—A DARING SHARPSHOOTER—THE DOY'S STRATAGEM—ARCHITECTURE OF THE BARI—THE DJIBBA TRIBE—THEIR NATIONAL PRIDE—DJIBBA WEAPONS—THE AXE, CLUB, AND KNIFE—BRACELET—THE SCALPLOCKS—ORNAMENT—A FROUD WARRIOR—THE NOUAKH OR NOUEHR TRIBE—THE CLAY WIG AND DEAD HELMET—THE CHIEF, JOCTIAN, AND HIS IMPORTUNITY—NOUEHR SALUTATION—THE DINKA TRIBE AND ITS WARLIKE CHARACTER—ZENEB TO THE RESCUE—FEUD WITH THE SHILLOOKS AND BAOARAS—DRESS OF THE DINKA—TREACHERY, AND THE TABLES TURNED—THE DINKA MARKET—AN EMBASSY OF PEACE—THE SHILLOOKS, THEIR LOCALITY, DRESS, AND APPEARANCE—THEIR PREDATORY HABITS—SKILL IN BOATING—A PASTORAL COLONY AND ITS MANAGEMENT—FISH-SPEARING—A SHILLOOK FAMILY—GOVERNMENT AMONG THE SHILLOOKS—MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

As the Shir tribe are frequently mentioned by those travellers who have passed through Central Africa, a brief mention of them will be necessary. The Shir country extends on either side of the Nile, in lat. 6° N., and long. 30° E.

The men are remarkable for never stirring out of their villages without all their personal property about them. Clothes, in our sense of the word, are not considered as property, the principal article of costume being a tuft or two of cock's-feathers on the top of the head. But they always carry their little stools slung on their backs, and no one ever moves without his loved pipe. Upon their pipe they lavish all their artistic powers, which, however, are not very considerable. Precious as is iron in this country, being used, like gold in Europe, as a medium of currency, the pipes are all mounted with this costly metal. The bowls are made of clay, conical in shape, and having a couple of prongs on which to rest. They are very large, holding quite a handful of tobacco, and their monthpieces are almost invariably made of iron.

Beside the implements of peace, the Shir always carry with them their weapons of war. These consist of clubs, made of a kind of ebony, black, solid, and heavy, a couple of lances, a bow, and a bundle of arrows, so that their hands are quite full of weapons. The bows are always kept strung, and the arrows are pointed with some hard wood, iron being too costly a metal for such a purpose. They are about three feet in length, and without feathers, so that they can only be used at a short distance.

The women, however, have some pretensions to dress. To a belt which goes round the waist is attached a small lapet of leather, which hangs in front. This is balanced behind by a sort of tail or long tassel of very thin leather thongs, which reach nearly down to the knees. Captain Speke remarks that this article of dress is probably the foundation of the reports that in Central Africa there is a race of men who have tails like horses. Such reports are rife, not only among Europeans, but among the Central Africans themselves, each tribe seeming to think that they are the only perfect race of men, and that all others have some physical defect.

A very amusing instance of such a belief is narrated by Mr. Petherick, a native having given him a most circumstantial account of tribes among which he had been, and where he had seen some very singular people. In one tribe, for example, he had seen people who, like the white man, could kill at a great distance. But instead of having odd-shaped pieces of wood and iron, which made a noise, they had bows and arrows, which latter could not be extracted. Had he stopped here, he might have been believed, the only exaggeration being in the range of the weapon. Unfortunately for his own character, he must needs add a number of other circumstances, and proceeded to tell of a people who had four eyes, two in the usual places and two behind, and who could therefore walk backwards as well as forwards—like the decapitated lady in the fairy tale, whose head was replaced wrong side forwards, "which was very useful in dressing her back hair."

The next tribe through which he passed frightened him exceedingly. They had the usual number of eyes, but one eye was under each arm, so that, when they wanted to look about them, they were obliged to lift up their arms.

Not liking these strange companions, he went still farther southwards, and there he saw people with tails a yard in length, and with faces like monkeys. But the most horrible people among whom he travelled were dwarfs, who had such enormous ears that, when they wished to rest for the night, they spread one ear beneath them for a mattress, and the other above them by way of covering.

The strange part in connexion with these wild tales is, that none of them are new. To the lovers of old legends all these monstrous races of men are perfectly familiar. Moreover, in that wonderful old book, the "Nuremberg Chronicle," there are woodcuts of all the strange people. There are the Acephali; whose eyes are in their breasts, there are the tailed men, the ape-faced men, the dwarfs, and the large-eared men. The origin of several of these wild notions is evident enough, and it seems probable that the idea of the large-eared race arose from the enormous ears of the African elephant, one of which is large enough to shelter a man beneath its covert.

To return to the Shir women. They are very fond of ornament, and nearly all the iron in the country which is not used in the decoration of pipes, or for the "spade-money," is worn upon the legs of the women. Rings of considerable thickness are fastened round the ankles, and a woman of consideration will often have so many of these rings that they extend far up the leg. As the women walk, these rings make a clanking sound, as if they wore iron fetters; but among the Shir belles this sound is thought to be very fashionable, and they cultivate the art of walking so as to make the anklets clank as much as possible. There is another ornament of which they are very fond. They take the shells of the river mussel, and cut it into small circular pieces, about the size of ordinary pearl buttons. These are strung together with the hair of the giraffe's-tail, which is nearly as strong as iron wire, and are rather effective when contrasted with the black skins of the wearers. Like the Wanyoro and other tribes, the Shir of both sexes knock out the incisor teeth of the lower jaw.

These women are skilful as basket-makers, the principal material being the leaf of the dome or doom palm. I have a mat of their manufacture, which is woven so neatly and closely, and with so tasteful an arrangement of colours, that it might easily be taken for the work of a European. It is oval, and about eighteen inches in diameter. The centre is deep red, surrounded by alternate rings of red and black, which have a very admirable effect upon the pale yellow of the mat itself.

The food of the Shir tribe consists largely of the lotus-seed, the white species being that which is commonly used. Just before the seed is ripe it is gathered in the pod, which looks something like an artichoke, and contains a vast quantity of little grains, rather like those of the poppy both in size and flavour. When gathered, the pods are bored and strung upon reeds about four feet in length. They are then taken into the village, dried in the sun, and stored away for food. The fruit of the doom palm is also ground and used as flour.

There is one very strange kind of diet which prevails along the upper part of the White Nile. The people have large herds of cattle, and they not only live on the milk, but bleed them monthly, and cook the blood with their flour and meal.

THE BARI.

BETWEEN lat. 4° and 8° N. and long. 31° 33' E. there are several tribes so peculiar as to deserve a brief notice before we pass westward to the land of the negroes. The first of these is the Bari tribe, which is situated on the eastern bank of the Nile.

They are a warlike and dangerous tribe, being well armed, and capable of using their weapons, so that a traveller who wishes to pass safely through their land must be able to show an armed front. When Captains Speke and Grant passed through their country, an umbrella was accidentally left behind, and some of the men sent to fetch it. The Bari, however, drew up in battle array, evidently knowing that without their leaders the men might be safely bullied, so that the umbrella was left to the mercies of the Bari chief.

Owing to their position on the Nile, they do a great business in the slave-trade, for as far as Gondokoro, the capital of the Bari country, steamers have been able to ascend the river. Consequently, every party of strangers is supposed—and mostly with truth—to be a slaving expedition, and is dreaded by one part of the population, while it is courted by the other. The quarrelsome disposition of the Bari has often brought them into collision with the traders, and, as might be imagined, the superior arms and discipline of the latter have given them such a superiority, that the Bari are not as troublesome as they used to be. Still, they are always on the watch for an opportunity of extortion, and if a traveller even sits under a tree, they will demand payment for its shade.

When Sir S. Baker was at Gondokoro, he was looked upon as a spy and opposer of the slave-trade, and consequently ran much greater risk of being killed than among the acknowledged savage tribes of the interior. And as the slave-dealers had further complicated matters by stealing cattle from one sub-tribe, with which they bought slaves from another, the journey through Bari-land was certain to be most perilous, and probably would be rendered impossible.

Once they organized a regular attack upon the party, stationing themselves on either side of a rocky gorge through which the road ran, and keeping up a continual discharge of their poisoned arrows. Fortunately, some of the natives, brilliant in their scarlet war-paint, had been seen ahead of the gorge, and preparations had been made for receiving the attack. They ran along the rocks like monkeys, every now and then halting to discharge a poisoned arrow, and then running on in readiness for another shot. They showed much courage on the occasion, coming within fifty or sixty yards of the armed escort, in spite of their firearms, which they seemed justifiably to despise, as the men who carried them had no idea of aim, and, provided that they pointed a musket somewhere towards the enemy, and fired it, thought that they had done all that was required.

However, the Bari were quite as bad as archers, and not a single arrow took effect. Many were diverted from their line by the branches of trees and the clusters of bamboo, while those that flew straight were easily avoided, on account of the weakness and stiffness of the bow, which would only project them feebly and slowly. The end of the skirmish was that, although the leader of the expedition did not think it worth while to fire at so insignificant an enemy, one of the Bari was somehow shot through the body, probably by a bullet aimed at somebody else, and a few were thought to be wounded. They then took to their heels and ran off.

During the march the Bari still hung about the caravan, and at night completely surrounded it, their forms being quite invisible unless the sentinel lay on the ground, and contrived to see the outline of their forms above the horizon. They even were audacious enough to creep close to the camp, and discharge their arrows at random into it, in the hope of hitting some one; but this mode of assault was effectually checked by a volley of buckshot, which killed one of the most daring of them. When his body was found next morning, lying about thirty yards from the camp, the bow was in his hand, and a supply

of poisoned arrows by his side. Four of his arrows were afterwards found in the camp, and their ingeniously barbed heads charged with deadly poison showed that the death of the former owner was well deserved.

It was fortunate for the travellers that the Bari are such wretched archers, as the arrows, when they do strike a man, are tolerably sure to kill him. The poison with which they are imbued has not the rapidity of action which distinguishes that of the Bosjesman, but it is scarcely less formidable, though less swift. The effect of the poison is to destroy the life of the surrounding flesh, so that a limb which has been pierced by one of the arrows is attacked by a slow kind of mortification, and thus the wound ensures death, which is far more painful, because so much slower, than that which is caused by the poison grub, the euphorbia juice, or the venom of the serpent.

Unpleasant as these Bari are in their ordinary state, they can be trained into good and faithful attendants, and are excellent material for soldiers. On one occasion, when a



A BARI HOMESTEAD.

large party of the Madi had attacked a body of traders, killed the standard-bearer, and nearly carried off the standard itself, a young Bari boy came to the rescue, shot with his pistol the man who was carrying off the standard, snatched it from him, and took it safely to his master.

One of these Bari lads, a drummer named Arnout, saved the life of his master by a stratagem. While the latter was reloading his gun, he was attacked by several natives, when young Arnout ran up, and, though weaponless, presented his drumstick at the enemy. Thinking it to be some novel kind of firearm, the assailants ran away, leaving Arnout master of the field.

The appearance of the Bari is rather remarkable. Their heads are round and bullet-shaped, with low foreheads, and much development behind the ears and at the nape of the neck, so that the general conformation of the head is anything but pleasing, and is a good index to the character of the people. As they shave their heads, the formation of the skull is easily seen.

They are a tall, well-grown, and well-fed people, thus being a great contrast to the Kutch and several other tribes; and, although they wear but little clothing, they contrive to spend much time on personal adornment. The men shave the whole of their heads, with the exception of a little tuft of hair on the top, which is preserved as an attachment

for a few feathers from a cock's tail. When they go to war, and even in their own villages, they rub themselves with a kind of vermilion mixed with grease, and cover the whole of their person with this pigment. The men never stir without their weapons, which consist of a bow, arrows, and a spear.

The bow is fully six feet in length, and looks a very formidable weapon; but it is so stiff and inelastic that, as has been already mentioned, it cannot propel the heavy arrows with much force. The arrows are cruelly barbed, and the butt of the shaft is spread out so as to allow a wide notch to be cut in it. This widened butt is seen in arrows throughout a large part of Africa, and there is now before me a Zanzibar quiver, full of arrows, kindly presented by J. A. Wood, Esq. R.N. These arrows are made with wonderful neatness, but are spoiled in appearance by the width of the butt. How the natives can use these arrows without having their left hand cut to pieces by the butt is really wonderful; and as it must strike against the bow, and deflect the arrow from its intended course, the wretched archery of the natives is accounted for.

Besides his weapons, the Bari man always carries his stool, slinging the latter behind him. When he stands, he has an odd mode of reposing himself, which reminds the observer of the stork, flamingo, and other long-shanked birds. One foot rests on the ground, while the other is pressed against the leg just below the knee, and the man steadies himself by resting the butt of the spear on the ground. Generally, the bow, arrows, and pipe are tucked between the legs while the owner is standing.

The women shave the whole of their heads, and, by way of dress, wear a little apron about six inches square, sometimes made of beads strung together, and sometimes of iron rings linked in each other like chain-mail. These last aprons are much valued. They also adorn themselves by making a vast quantity of semicircular scars on the body, from the breast down to the waist, so that at a little distance they look as if they wore a cuirass of scales. They are as fond of the vermilion and grease as their husbands, and the effect of this pigment on the scars is to increase the resemblance to scale armour.

The houses are neatly built. Each family resides within a considerable space surrounded by a hedge of euphorbia, and the whole of the interior is levelled, and carefully laid down with a sort of cement, composed of wood-ashes, cowdung, and clay. This mixture soon dries in the sun, and forms a kind of asphalt, so that it can be swept easily. The huts are floored with the same material, and both they and the enclosure are kept scrupulously clean. The homestead consists of a number of huts, according to the size of the family; and near them are placed the granaries, which are carefully raised on posts.

As is the case in so many parts of Africa, the roof of the circular hut projects for some distance beyond the low walls, so as to form a sort of shady verandah. The door of the hut is not more than two feet high. This form of hut reminds the traveller of the Bechuana houses, while another custom is almost exactly identical with one which is practised among the Damaras.

If the reader will refer to page 349, he will see a representation of a Damara tomb. The Bari bury their dead within the enclosure of the homestead, and in like manner fix a pole in the ground, and tie to it the horns and skulls of oxen. In order to show that it is the tomb of a Bari, a tuft of cock's feathers is fastened to the top of the pole, in imitation of that which the deceased once bore on his head.

THE DJIBBA.

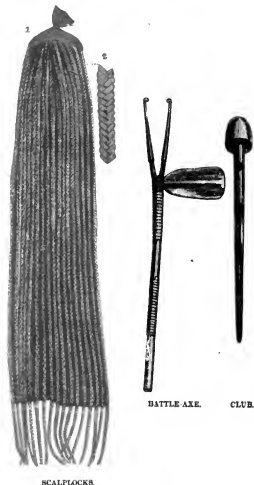
PROCEEDING still northward, and diverging a little to the east, we come to a large and formidable tribe called the Djibba. Their territory is situated about lat. 7° N. and long. 34° E., and occupies a large tract of country almost encircled by the Sobat River, one of the many tributaries of the Nile.

The Djibba are a bold and warlike tribe. They are not negroes, neither are they black their colour being a dark brown. Their stature is tall, and, except in colour, they bear much resemblance to the Shillooks, who will be presently described. It has been thought that they might be an offshoot of that tribe, but they indignantly deny any relationship either to the Shillook or any other tribe; and even hold themselves aloof from the warlike Dinkas, with whom so many inferior tribes are only too glad to claim relationship.

These people are essentially warriors, and have a most remarkable set of weapons.

Spears of course they possess, and he is a happy man who has a weapon with an iron head. Iron is scarce in the Djibba country, and, in consequence, many of the warriors are obliged to content themselves with fastening the sharp horns of antelopes to their spear shaft, until they can manage to procure the coveted iron head. When a Djibba warrior does possess so valuable a weapon, he takes very great care of it, keeping the edges as sharp as a razor, and covering the head with a hide sheath. The sheath is attached to the shaft by a thong, so that there shall be no danger of losing it, and it is never uncovered except when the spear is to be used.

They also have clubs and axes of different shapes, and examples of the most characteristic forms of these weapons are given in the accompanying illustration. The club is formed from a dark, hard, and

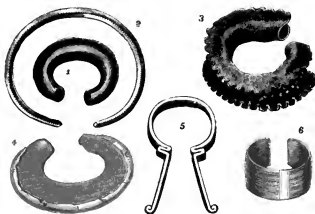


SCALPLOCK.

heavy wood, and is remarkable for the mushroom-like shape of the head. This shape is particularly mentioned, because it is a favourite one in Central Africa, and among the

Dôr tribe expands until it is exactly like a large flat-headed mushroom, with sharp edges (see the illustration on page 494, fig. 2). The axe reminds the observer of the battle-axe of the Middle Ages, which was equally adapted for thrusting or striking.

If the reader will now refer to the accompanying illustration, he will see some very remarkable objects, which serve the double purpose of ornaments and weapons. As is evident from their shape, they are worn on the wrist, so that the wearer is never entirely unarmed. Fig. 3 is an iron bracelet, very ingeniously made, considering the imperfect tools of the native blacksmith. The Djibba workman first takes a thin plate of iron, sharpens the edges, and cuts a row of deep notches along them; he then rolls it longitudinally, so as to form half a cylinder; and, lastly, bends it round into the form of a bracelet. When it is placed on the wrist, the two ends are pressed or hammered together, until the bracelet is held firmly in its place.



BRACELETS.

Another and far more formidable weapon is seen at fig. 4. This is a bracelet made of a flat plate of iron, about an inch and a half in width. On the inside it is very thick, a quarter of an inch at least, and it is thinned gradually to the edge, which is kept exceedingly sharp. In order to prevent it from injuring the wearer, a sort of sheath of stout leather runs round the edge, and is held in its place by its own elasticity, so that it can be pulled off in a moment, and replaced almost as quickly. Whenever the warrior comes to close quarters, he strips off the leathern sheath, and, rushing in upon his adversary, strikes at the face with the sharp edge, or, flinging the left arm round him, cuts his naked body almost into pieces with rapid strokes of this terrible weapon.

These drawings, together with those of the club and axe (p. 519) and figs. 5 and 6 in the accompanying illustration, are taken from specimens in the collection of Colonel Lane Fox, who kindly added to my museum the bracelets marked 1 and 2.

A well-armed Djibba warrior also carries a club made on exactly the same principle. It is about the size of an ordinary racket, and very nearly the same shape, except that the flattened portion is not so regular. Indeed, if an ordinary golf-club had a head which could be flattened out until it was about a foot long, and seven or eight inches wide, it would almost exactly resemble the "assaya," as this club is called. The edge of the weapon is kept very sharp, and is guarded by a sheath of hide exactly like that of the knife-bracelet. The New Zealanders formerly used an axe-club of similar construction, though very much larger.

In the left-hand illustration on page 519 is shown another proof of the essentially war-like nature of the Djibba tribe. When a Djibba warrior kills a foe in battle, he cuts off his head, and takes it home with him; he then cuts a number of leathern thongs, removes all the hair from the head of the enemy, and hands them both to a friend, who undertakes the office of decorating the victor with the proofs of valour.

First the thongs are plaited into sixteen or seventeen bands, a part of one being shown of its original size at fig. 2. One end of the bands is then woven firmly into the back of the head, and is so managed, that as the hair grows it renders the fastening more and more secure. The hair of the dead man is then matted together into a sort of felt, about a quarter of an inch in thickness, and sewn firmly to the under side of the leathern bands.

This process being accomplished, the Djibba warrior stalks proudly forth, feeling himself every inch a man, and enjoying the envy and admiration of those who have not as yet been fortunate enough to attain such an honourable trophy.

Whenever he kills another enemy, he adds to the length, but not to the width, of this singular ornament; and as he despoils the slain man of all his ornaments, he is able to buy cowries with which to enhance the beauty of his scalp-locks, fastening them in rows along the leathern bands. A warrior of eminence will sometimes have this trophy of inordinate length. I have seen one that was brought over by Mr. Petherick, which was so long that, when a man of ordinary height placed it on his head, the end trailed on the ground. It was so thickly covered with cowries, that the leathern bands and hair could not be seen until it was lifted up, and the proud owner had also extended the cowries over the top of his head nearly to the eyes in front, and over the ears on either side.

The weight of this ornament was enormous, and it is really wonderful that any amount of pride could have induced any man to subject himself to such discomfort. The celebrated pearl suit of Prince Esterhazy must have been singularly uncomfortable, but then it was only worn on special occasions, whereas the Djibba warrior cannot relieve himself of his honourable but weighty decoration.

The existence of such an ornament shows that the Djibba are fond of decoration. They are moderately well clothed, wearing goat-skin dresses, with the hairy side outwards. The dress passes over the left shoulder, leaving the right arm free, and then goes round the waist, descending to mid-thigh. Ivory armlets of good workmanship are worn on the upper arm, heavy belts of cowries are tied round the waist, and both the ankles and waist are ornamented with polished iron rings. Several forms of these ornaments are seen in the illustration on page 520. Figs. 1 and 2 are the simplest and the most common forms. Fig. 1 is a man's bracelet, and weighs almost a quarter of a pound. Fig. 2 is much slighter, and belonged to a woman. Figs. 5 and 6 are examples of the tasteful ingenuity which the native smiths lavish on their personal adornments.

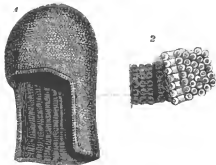
THE NUEHR.

WE now come to another of those remarkable tribes which inhabit Central Africa.

About lat. 9° N. and long. 25° E. there is a large district inhabited by a tribe called the Nuehr or Nouaer. Contrary to the usual custom, this tribe possesses land on both sides of the Nile, which in the midst of their territory spreads itself into a lake. The Nuehr are a fine-looking race of savages, and very like savages they look. The men are tall, powerful, and well-formed, but their features approach the negro type, and are heavier and coarser than those of the tribes which have been previously mentioned. The women are not nearly so good-looking as the men, and are rather clumsily built.

Neither sex is much troubled with clothes. The males never wear any clothes at all; nor do the females, until they are married, when they tie a fringe of grass round their waists, some of the wealthier women being able to use a leathern fringe, of which they are very proud. Their ornaments really seem to serve no other purpose but to disfigure the wearers as much as possible.

Beginning with the head, the men stain their woolly hair of a dusty red by a mixture of which ashes form the chief part. They then take a sort of pipe-clay, and plaster it thickly into the hair at the back part of the head, dressing it up and shaping it until it is formed into a cone, the shape of the ornament varying according to the caprice of the individual. By means of this clay head-dress the hair is thrown back from the face, the expression of which is not improved by the horizontal lines that are tattooed across it.



NUEHR HELMET.

From Colonel Lane Fox's Collection.

A head-dress of remarkable beauty was brought from this tribe by Mr. Petherick, and is now in the collection of Colonel Lane Fox. It is white, in imitation of the white clay with which the head is usually decorated, and is made of cylindrical beads shaped as if they were pieces of tobacco-pipe. These beads, or bugles, as they ought perhaps to be called, are threaded on string, and fastened together in a very ingenious manner. The singular point in this head-dress is the exact resemblance to the soldier's casque of ancient Egypt, and to the helmets now in use in India and other parts of the world.

The natural glossy black of the skin, which has so pleasing an appearance, is utterly destroyed by a coating of wood-ashes, which gives to the surface a kind of greyish look. On the upper arm they generally wear a large armband of ivory, and have heavy coils of beads round their necks. The wrists are adorned with rings of copper and other ornaments, and on the right wrist they carry an iron ring armed with projecting blades, very similar to that which is worn by the Latookas.

Joctian, the chief of the Nuehr tribe, was asked by Sir S. Parker what was the use of this weapon, and by way of answer he simply pointed to his wife's arms and back, which were covered with scars produced by this primitive wife-tamer. He seemed quite proud of these marks, and evidently considered them merely as ocular proofs that his wife was properly subservient to her husband. In common with the rest of his tribe, he had a small bag slung round his neck by way of a pocket, which held bits of wood beads and all kinds of trifles. He asked for everything he saw, and when anything of small size was given to him, it straightway went into the bag.

Still, putting aside these two traits of cruelty and covetousness, Joctian seems to have been a tolerably agreeable savage, and went away delighted with the presents he had received, instead of grumbling that he could not get more, as is the usual way among savage chiefs. It was rather strange that, although he was so charmed with beads and bracelets, he declined to accept a knife, saying that it was useless to him.

He had in his hands a huge pipe, holding nearly a quarter of a pound of tobacco. Every Nuehr man has one of these pipes, which he always carries with him, and should his supply of tobacco be exhausted, he lights a piece of charcoal, puts it into his pipe, and inhales the vapour that it draws from the tobacco-saturated bowl.

The women are not so much adorned as the men, probably because the stronger sex prefer to use the ornaments themselves. At a little distance the women all look as if they were smoking cigarettes. This odd appearance is caused by a strange ornament

which they wear in their upper lip. They take a piece of iron wire, about four inches in length, and cover it with small beads. A hole is then pierced in the upper lip, and the ornament inserted, so as to project forward and rather upward.

The Nuehr are very fond of beads, and are glad to exchange articles of food for them. One kind of bead, about the size and shape of a pigeon's egg, is greatly valued by them; and, when Mr. Petherick was travelling through their country, he purchased an ox for eight such beads.

The chief came on board the boat, and, as usual, asked for everything he saw. Among other odd things, he set his affection on Mr. Petherick's shoes, which, as they were nearly worn out, were presented to him. Of course they were much too small for him, and the attempts which he made to put them on were very amusing. After many failures, he determined on taking them home, where he thought he might be able to get them on by greasing his feet well.

When the chief entered the cabin, and saw the wonders of civilized life, he was quite overcome with the novel grandeur, and proceeded to kneel on one knee, in order to give the salutation due to a great chief. "Grasping my right hand, and turning up the palm, he quietly spat into it, and then, looking into my face, he deliberately repeated the process. Staggered at the man's audacity, my first impulse was to knock him down, but his features expressing kindness only, I vented my rage by returning the compliment with all possible interest. His delight seemed excessive, and resuming his seat, he expressed his conviction that I must be a great chief. Similar salutes followed with each of his attendants, and friendship was established."

This strange salutation extends through many of the tribes that surround the Nuehr; but in some, as for example the Kytch, the saluter merely pretends to spit in the hand of his friend, and does not really do so.

THE DINKA.

STILL south of the Nuehr tribe we come to a singular district extending on either side of the Nile. This country is inhabited by two tribes, who are both warlike, both at deadly feud with each other, and both fond of making unexpected raids into the enemy's country. The tribe that inhabits the left or west bank is called the Shillook, and that which occupies the eastern bank is the Dinka or Denka tribe. We will take the Dinkas first.

They have more of the negro in their aspect than the tribe which has just been described. They include many smaller or sub-tribes, all of which speak the same language, or at least a dialect of it. Without going into any minute details as to the peculiarity of each division, we will simply take the leading characteristics of the great and formidable Dinka tribe. That they are exceedingly warlike has already been stated. Indeed, had they not been so, they would long ago have been exterminated; for, what with the incessant inroads of the Shillooks and Bagaras from the west, and various Arab tribes from the north and east, they could not have held their own had they not been brave men, and trained to arms.

The martial spirit extends even to the women, and was once of very great service to Sir Samnel Baker, while on his travels. A dangerous quarrel had suddenly arisen, and a number of Arabs were attacking the white leaders, some being armed with swords and the others with spears. One of the latter had got behind Sir Samnel's head man, and was about to make a thrust with his lance. There happened to be with the exploring party a Dinka woman, named Zeneb, and, as soon as she saw the *émeute*, she snatched up

the heavy handle of an axe, rushed into the thickest of the fray, knocked down the Arab with a blow on his head, and instantly twisted his spear out of his hand, while he was stunned with the unexpected blow. This timely aid was the turning-point in the skirmish, and in a minute or two the Arabs were conquered and disarmed. Zeneb had afterwards the satisfaction of smashing the lances of the vanquished Arabs, and boiling the coffee with the fragments.

The principal weapon of the Dinkas is the lance, but they also use clubs of various shapes. Two modifications of their favourite form are shown in the accompanying illustration, and are drawn from specimens in Colonel Lane Fox's collection. These clubs were brought from Central Africa by Mr. Petherick. In form they strongly remind the observer of certain clubs in use among the Polynesians, and indeed might easily be mistaken for such weapons. The club is employed for a double purpose. It is held in the left hand, and used as a shield, with which to turn aside the lance-thrust of the enemy, and, when the enemy has been wounded, the club is ready for the operation of knocking out his brains.



CLUBS.

Warlike as they may be, the Dinkas are not so actively aggressive as their neighbours, the Shillooks, and never frequent the banks of the Nile unless compelled to do so by drought. They are agriculturists after a fashion, and keep vast herds of cattle, and it is chiefly on account of their cattle that they are sometimes forced to approach the river bank, and so to expose themselves to the attacks of their inveterate foes, the Shillooks and Bagaras, who not only steal their cattle, but carry off their women and children. The Bagaras are excellent horsemen, and swim their steeds across the river, placing one hand on the animal's quarters, and swimming alongside. They are also great elephant-hunters, pursuing their mighty game on horseback, armed only with a spear, leaping from the horse and inflicting a mortal wound, and springing on their steeds again before the elephant has had time to turn himself.

The dress of both sexes is simple enough. The men wear a piece of skin attached to a girdle, but it hangs behind and not before, except on occasions of ceremony, when it is carefully brought round to the front. Beads are of course worn, the quantity varying according to the means of the possessor. The married women wear small aprons, and the girls and children nothing at all, with the exception of beads and other ornaments. Like those of the Nuehr tribe, the Dinka women perforate the upper lip, and place in it a little bit of stick covered with beads. The women are not at all pretty, whatever good looks they may have had being completely neutralized by the habit of shaving the head. The girls are very fond of an ornament, which is a series of hollow iron cones, about half an inch or so in diameter at the bottom, and tapering to a point above. Through the upper part a hole is bored, so that the cones can be strung on a leathern thong. They are of very different lengths; those which come in front being about four inches long, while those at the back measure barely two inches. As the girl walks about, this waistband gives forth a pleasant tinkling, of which the wearer is extremely proud. Such an ornament is extremely prized, and as it is almost indestructible, it is handed down from mother to child, and so there is scarcely a Dinka maiden who does not possess one.

The pursuits of the Dinkas in time of peace are mostly limited to hunting and tending cattle. Agriculture is rather despised, and left to the women, and the consequence is, that the capabilities of the soil are never fairly developed. Indeed, they only till small patches of ground near their huts, and there cultivate maize, millet, gourds, yams, nuts, cotton, capsicum, and similar plants. They seldom eat the flesh of their cattle, unless a cow happens to die a natural death, in which case a great feast is held: for their supplies of meat they trust almost entirely to their skill in hunting. The rich live principally on the milk of their cattle, and should they have more milk than they can

consume, they barter it with other tribes for grain. They are clever fishermen, and those who are not well off are accustomed to frequent the banks of rivers or lakes, trying to kill the hippopotamus, and in the meantime subsisting on fish. They have an ingenious method of transporting fish to a distance by wrapping them in thick clay, and as this covering can be made air-tight, the fish can be kept for several days even in so hot a country.

Agriculture being thus neglected, it naturally follows that great distress is occasionally felt in the country, great numbers being reduced to spend the whole of their time in searching for grains and berries. Sometimes they hire themselves as servants, and take care of the herds; and in bad years it is not uncommon to find in the bush the bodies of men, women, and children, who have died from hunger in a country which is capable of supplying both the necessaries and luxuries of life.

With one branch of the Dinka tribe Mr. Petherick remained for some time, and had a good opportunity of studying their manners. His first reception was not a promising one, as the chief fully intended to take by force all the beads that had been brought for the purchase of ivory, and threatened destruction to the whole party if this modest notion were not at once carried out. However, the discharge of a gun, and its effects at a distance, terrified the chief to such an extent, that he was very glad to assume a more humble tone. The next stratagem was to frighten away all the porters, so that the merchandise could not be carried out of the country, and to cut off the supply of water and provisions, in order to force Mr. Petherick and his party to leave the district. Indeed, the chief stated plainly that, as they could not remove their goods out of his country, the best plan would be to hand them over at once, and proceed on their journey.

Previous to these events, the life of the same traveller had been endangered by an alliance of six Dinka tribes against him, they having imbibed the usual notion that the only object of a white man in coming into their territory was to destroy the slave trade, and bring white enemies among them.

This was while he was among the Dôr tribe, with some of whom the Dinkas had already contrived to pick a quarrel. He therefore fenced in his camp very strongly, and, by erecting a kind of bastion at each angle, made it so formidable a fortress that the Dinkas were afraid to attack it. They hung about the place for six weeks, and at last Mr. Petherick determined on striking a bold stroke, and turning the tables upon them.

Knowing the exceeding value which they placed on cattle, he thought that if he could carry off one of their herds they would be brought to their senses. He sent off a detachment of his party, who seized six hundred head of cattle, beside sheep and goats innumerable. As had been anticipated, the Dinkas, who really value their cattle much more than human life, were terror-stricken, and came humbly suing for peace. This was granted, on their giving in their submission, and the cattle were handed over to a Dôr chief, in order to provide food for his village. However, the Dinkas kept bad faith, for they continually hung upon Mr. Petherick's line of march; and once a sub-tribe, called Ajack, had the temerity to make an open charge. Of course they were at once repulsed, with a loss of several dead and wounded; but in consequence of these repeated attacks it was found necessary to halt for the night in some cattle-shed, and to loop-hole the walls for musketry.

A considerable trade in beads and tusks was done among the Dinka tribe, who at last became rather sharp dealers. Mr. Petherick gives an amusing account of one of their markets:—

"After fifteen days' tedious tracking, we made fast under some Dinka villages situated on its southern bank, where we succeeded in bartering numerous tusks from the natives, who received us with open arms, in the hope that we would defend them, in case of emergency, from the aggressions of the Nuehr.

"I proceeded on shore to meet them, accompanied by an interpreter, a man bearing a bag of various kinds of beads, and half a dozen armed men, to guard against treachery, which, considering the negroes were armed with clubs and lances, was a necessary precaution. My interpreter and myself seated ourselves opposite to the owner of the tusk,

who obstinately retained his seat, refusing us an inspection of it. Placing a hide on the ground, a variety of beads, cowrie-shells, and copper bracelets were displayed thereon. The beauty of these provoked striking signs of approbation, the vendor and bystanders grinning and rubbing their stomachs with both hands. A consultation then took place between the party and his friends as to the relative merits of the beads, which resulted in the following dialogue :—

" *Vendor.*—' Ah! your beads are beautiful, but the bride (tusk) I offer is lovely: like yourself, she is white and tall, and worthy of great price.'

" *Self.*—' Truly the beauty of the bride is undeniable; but, from what I can see of her, she is cracked, whilst my beads are perfect.'

" *Vendor.*—' The beads you offer are truly beautiful, but I think they must have been gathered before they were ripe.'

" *Self.*—' Oh, no! they were gathered when mature, and their colour is peculiar to them, and you will find that they will wear as well as the best red; they came from a different country.'

" *Vendor.*—' Well, let me have some more of them.'

" His request being complied with, rising from the tusk and throwing himself upon the beads, he collected them greedily; at the same time the possession of the tusk was disputed by half a dozen negroes, who, stating they had assisted to carry it on their shoulders, claimed a recompense. On this being complied with by a donation to each man, another set of men came forward under the same pretence, and the tusk was seized by my men at one extremity, whilst they had hold of the other, and in perfect good humour struggled for its possession: at last, to cut the matter short, I threw handfuls of beads amongst the crowd, which resulted in the immediate abandonment of the tusk for a scramble after them. In the meantime the purchase was carried off and safely lodged on board."

When Mr. Petherick passed through the same country in 1856, the Ajack sub-tribe thought that they had better make peace with so formidable a visitor, and accordingly the chief Anoin begged him to rest for the night at one of their villages, and favourably conclude a treaty of amity. As soon as the camp had been made, and the sentries set, a number of young girls—some of them really good-looking, for Africans—arrived with milk and flour, and were delighted with some beads, which they added to their attire; this consisting of bead-strings round their necks, waists, and ankles. Encouraged by their reception, others arrived in succession, and set to work at grinding corn and boiling porridge as if they had belonged to the expedition all their lives.

Suddenly a whistle was heard in the distance, and scarcely had the sound died away, when all the women had vanished, and a dead silence succeeded to the merry chatter which had filled the place. After a while a strange voice was heard in the surrounding darkness, asking for permission to approach, and when an assuring answer was returned, Anoin and his brother stepped into the light of the watch-fires, followed by a number of men leading an ox. They were fully armed; but their dress consisted merely of a piece of leopard-skin slung over Anoin's shoulder as a mark of rank. Anoin wore bracelets of copper, while those of his companions were of iron. Both he and his brother wore caps made of white beads sewn tightly on soft hide. The beads were strung on cotton threads, spun by themselves with a distaff and spindle, and a thorn had served the purpose of a needle.

After seating themselves, Anoin began a speech, offering peace, and presenting the bullock as a proof of sincerity. The animal was accepted, and in less than an hour the only relics of the ox were the white and polished bones scattered on the ground. A number of smaller chiefs then assembled, and all proceeded to greet Mr. Petherick by the usual, though scarcely agreeable, custom of spitting in his face, and they then proceeded to business.

First, the Dinka chiefs laid their spears and clubs in the middle of the circle, and then Mr. Petherick laid upon them his rifle and pistols. The chief next stepped over the heap several times, and vowed that neither he nor any of his tribe would ever use the weapons against the white man, and wishing that, if the oath were broken, he should

be the first to perish by the weapons of the aggrieved party. Mr. Petherick went through the same ceremony himself, and a copious indulgence in beer and pipes cemented the alliance.

THE SHILLOOKS.

EXACTLY on the opposite bank of the White Nile is found the great Shillook tribe, with which the Dinka is always at feud.

The Shillooks are a tall and finely-made race of men, approaching very closely to the negro, being black, with woolly hair. The flat nose and enormous lips of the true negro are, however, absent, and only in a few cases is there an approach towards that structure.

The Shillook men are very fond of ornament, though dress is not considered necessary. Their ornaments are similar to those which have already been described, and consist chiefly of iron bracelets, anklets, and bead necklaces. They have also one rather singular decoration. This is an enormous ivory ring, which is worn above the elbow of the right arm. It is concave on the inside, and is so large that it is used as a pocket for holding small objects. Small caps of black ostrich-plumes decorate their heads, and many of these caps are ornamented with a circle of cowrie-shells in the middle.

Their weapons are clubs and lances, the latter being very long, and having iron wire twisted round the butt, so as to counterbalance the head. They also carry the remarkable bow-like shield which has been already mentioned.

The women wear no clothing until marriage, and then assume a couple of pieces of dressed hide, one in front and the other behind. These hides reach nearly to the aukles, and are decorated round the lower edge with iron rings and bells. The heads are shaved, and the ears are bored all round their edges with a number of holes, from which hang small clusters of beads.

The villages of the Shillooks are built very regularly, and, in fact, are so regular as to be stiff and formal in appearance. The houses are made of reeds, tall, of nearly the same height, and placed close to each other in regular rows or streets, and when seen from a distance are compared by Sir S. Baker to rows of button mushrooms.

The Shillooks are quite an accomplished people, being warlike, pastoral, agricultural, piscatorial, and having a well-defined government.

Not only do they keep up the continual feud with their powerful neighbours, the Dinka, but they take advantage of the overflowing of the Nile to launch their canoes, drop quietly down the river, and attack the Arab population on either bank. So bold are they, that on several occasions they descended the river nearly half way to Khartoum, hid their canoes in the reeds, and crossed the country to Sennar or the Blue Nile. Taking the inhabitants by surprise, they carried off numbers of women and children as slaves, drove away large herds of cattle, re-embarked, and got safely home with their spoil. At length the Egyptian Government was obliged to interfere, and had to place troops between the White and Blue Nile.

Besides their canoes, the Shillooks make most ingenious vessels, which are a sort of compromise between a raft and a canoe.

In this part of Africa there is a tree called the ambatch, or ambadj (*Anemone mirabilis*). This tree grows tolerably straight, and tapers gradually from the ground to the tip. It never grows to any great size, and the wood is almost as light as cork. To make a raft, the Shillook cuts a sufficient number of ambadj-trees, lays them side by side, and lashes them firmly to each other. The tapering ends are then drawn together with cords, and also lashed firmly, and the result is a singularly effective and buoyant raft, easily guided from its shape, and so light that a man can carry it on his shoulders.

When these rafts are taken out of the water, they are placed upright on their bases, and two or three are supported against each other, just as soldiers pile their arms. One of these rafts, nine feet in length, and only four feet wide at the stern, can carry two men.

The Shillooks are very clever in the management of their rafts, which they propel with small paddles; and even the little boys may be seen paddling about, not in the least afraid of the swarming crocodiles, but always carrying a lance with which to drive off the horrid reptiles if they attempt an attack.

When Mr. Petherick was passing through this country, the daring Shillooks had established a small colony on the eastern or Dinka bank of the river, on account of the



SHILLOOKS CROSSING THE RIVER.

good pasturage. As soon as the Dinka had withdrawn towards the interior, the Shillooks crossed over, built a number of reed huts, ran an extemporized fence round them, and then brought over their cattle. They had plenty of outposts inland, and as soon as the enemy were reported the Shillooks embarked in their rafts, and paddled over to their own side of the river, the cattle plunging into the water in obedience to a well-known call, and following the canoes and rafts of their masters. Strange to say, the crocodiles do not meddle with cattle under such circumstances.

Aided by their rafts, the Shillooks employ much of their time in fishing. They do not use either net or hook, but employ the more sportsmanlike spear. This weapon is about ten feet in length, and has a barbed iron head loosely stuck into the end of the shaft, both being connected by a slack cord. As soon as a fish is struck, the shaft is disengaged from the head, and being of light wood floats to the surface, and so "plays" the fish until it is exhausted, and can be drawn ashore by a hooked stick. The Shillooks often catch fish at random, wading through the river against the stream, and striking their spears right and left into the water.

Polygamy is of course practised among the people. Mr. Petherick gives a very amusing description of an interview with a chief and his family.

"At one of these villages, Gosa, with a view to establishing a trade in hides, or if possible in ivory, I made the acquaintance of its chief, Dood, who, with several of the village elders, entered my boat, the bank being crowded with every man, woman, and

child of the village. The chief, a man past middle age, struck me by his intelligent remarks, and a bearing as straightforward as it was dignified and superior to that of his companions.

"A few presents of beads were greedily clutched by his attendants, he, however, receiving them as if they were his due; and, passing an order to one of his men, the trifle I had given him was returned by a counter-present of a sheep. On his leaving I requested he would call before sunrise, attended by his sons only, when I would make him and them suitable presents.

"Long before the appointed time Dood and a crowd of men and striplings, with their inseparable accompaniments of clubs and lances, on the shore, woke me from my slumbers; and, as I appeared on deck, a rush took place towards me, with cries of 'The Benj! the Benj!' (the chief), followed by salutations innumerable. As soon as these shouts subsided, Dood, disembarassing his mouth with some difficulty of a quid of tobacco the size of a small orange, sat down by my side.

"My first remark was astonishment at the number of his followers, having expected none but his sons. 'Oh, 'tis all right: you don't know my family yet; but, owing to your kind promises, I sent to the cattle-kraals for the boys'; and with the pride of a father he said, 'These are my fighting sons, who many a time have stuck to me against the Dinka, whose cattle have enabled them to wed.'

"Notwithstanding a slight knowledge of negro families, I was still not a little surprised to find his valiant progeny amount to forty grown-up men and hearty lads. 'Yes,' he said, 'I did not like to bring the girls and little boys, as it would look as if I wished to impose upon your generosity.'

"'What! more little boys and girls! What may be their number, and how many wives have you?'

"'Well, I have divorced a good many wives; they get old, you know; and now I have only ten and five.' But when he began to count his children, he was obliged to have recourse to a reed, and, breaking it up into small pieces, said, 'I take no notice of babies, as they often die, you know; women are so foolish about children that I never care for them until they are able to lay a snare.'

"Like all negroes, not being able to count beyond ten, he called over as many names, which he marked by placing a piece of reed on the deck before him; a similar mark denoted another ten, and so on until he had named and marked the number of his children. The sum total, with the exception, as he had explained, of babies and children unable to protect themselves, was fifty-three boys and twenty girls—viz. seventy-three!

"After the above explanation I could no longer withhold presents to the host on the shore; and, pleased with my donations, he invited me to his house, where I partook of merissa and broiled fowl, in which, as a substitute for fat, the entrails had been left. Expressing a desire to see his wives, he willingly conducted me from hut to hut, where my skin, hair, and clothes underwent a most scrutinising examination. Each wife was located in a separate batch of huts; and, after having distributed my pocketfuls of loose beads to the lady chieftains and their young families, in whose good graces I had installed myself, I took leave of the still sturdy village chief."

The code of government among the Shillooks is simple enough. There is a sultan or superior officer, who is called the "Meck," and who possesses and exercises powers that are almost irresponsible. The Meck seems to appreciate the proverb that "familiarity breeds contempt," and keeps himself aloof from his subjects, seldom venturing beyond the limits of his own homestead. He will not even address his subjects directly, but forces them to communicate with him through the medium of an official. Any one who approaches him must do so on his knees, and no one may either stand erect or carry arms in his presence. He executes justice firmly and severely, and especially punishes murder and theft among his subjects, the culprit being sentenced to death, and his family sold as slaves.

Theft and murder, however, when committed against other tribes, are considered meritorious, and when a marauding party returns, the Meck takes one-third of the plunder. He also has a right to the tusks of all elephants killed by them, and he also expects a

present from every trader who passes through his territory. The Meck will not allow strangers to settle within the Shillook territories, but permits them to reside at Kaka, a large town on their extreme north. Here many trading Arabs live while they are making their fortune in exchanging beads, cattle-bells, and other articles for cattle, slaves, and ivory. The trade in the latter article is entirely carried on by the Meck, who has the monopoly of it, and makes the most of his privilege. The traffic at Kaka is by no means a free trade, for the Meck not only takes all the ivory, but his officials watch the proceedings in the market, and exercise a supervision over every bargain.

Probably on account of the presence of strangers, the Meck does not live at Kaka, but takes up his residence out in a village some ten miles up the river.

In the accompanying illustration is shown a figure of a curious musical instrument. It is taken from a specimen in my own collection, and represents an instrument which we may call a flute, in lieu of a better word. It is made of some hard wood, and is rudely covered with a spiral belts of iron and leather. An iron ring is also fastened through it, through which passes the leathern strap by which it is carried. The top hole is very small, and the sound produced by the instrument is of a wailing and lugubrious character.

Inside the flute is fitted an odd implement which we may call the cleaner. It is composed of an ostrich feather with the vanes cut short, and in order to render it long enough to reach to the bottom of the flute, it is lengthened by a wooden handle, to the end of which is attached a tuft of hairs from a cow's tail, by way of ornament. In length the flute measures rather more than eighteen inches, and, in consequence of the amount of iron upon it, the weight is more than might be supposed.



CHAPTER XLV.

THE ISHOGO, ASHANGO, AND OBONGO TRIBES.

WESTERN AFRICA—THE ISHOGO TRIBE AND ITS LOCALITY—DRESS AND ASPECT OF THE PEOPLE—THE SINGULAR HEAD-DRESS OF THE WOMEN—THEIR SKILL IN WEAVING—THE OUANDJAS, OR NATIVE FACTORIES—THE LOOM AND SHUTTLE—ARCHITECTURE OF THE ISHOOGS—CURIOUS DOORS—THE VILLAGE TREE—THE M'PAZA OR TWIN CEREMONY—GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE ISHOOGS—THE ASHANGO TRIBE—CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE—AN UNLUCKY SHOT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES—WAR CEREMONIES—THE TEMPLE, OR M'BUITI HOUSE, AND THE RELIGIOUS RITES PERFORMED IN IT—SUPERSTITIONS OF THE ASHANGOS—THE KENDO, OR BELL OF ROYALTY—RECEPTION OF A VISITOR—THE OBONGO TRIBE, OR BUSHMEN OF WEST AFRICA—THEIR SHORT AND STUNTED LOOK—KINDNESS OF THE ASHANGOS TOWARDS THEM—THE OBONGO MARKET—DOMESTIC CUSTOMS AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

We are now coming among some of the negro tribes, and shall see them as they are in their normal state before their customs and mode of life have been altered by the influence of Europeans.

A little below the equator, and between 10° and 12° E. longitude, is a district inhabited by the Ishogo, a very large and remarkable tribe. The Ishogo live along a rather narrow tract of country that extends diagonally south-westwards, parallel with the Rembo N'gouyai river, but divided from it by a range of hills.

The Ishogo are a fine race of men, black, with woolly hair, but not exhibiting the extreme negro development which characterises the aborigines of the west coast. They decorate themselves in rather a singular manner. Both sexes add a ruddy tinge to their native black by rubbing themselves with a red powder obtained by scraping two pieces of hardwood together, and they also disfigure themselves by removing the two middle teeth of the upper jaw.

Like other woolly-haired races, the Ishogo are very proud of their heads, and diminish the already scanty supply of hair with which Nature has supplied them. Eyelashes and eyebrows are unfashionable among them, and are carefully crased, while the hair of the head is dressed in the most extraordinary style. The men shave a circle round their heads, only allowing a round patch to remain on the crown. This is separated into three divisions, each of which is plaited into a lappet-like form, coming to a point at the end, and being finished off with a large bead, or perhaps a piece of polished wire. On account of the slow growth of the hair, an Ishogo cannot complete his head-dress under several years.

The women begin by making a sort of frame of grass-cloth, and fixing it to the head, at the top or at the back, as their taste may direct. They then work the woolly hair into it, and when that part of the process is completed, shave away all the hair that is not required for the purpose. When the head-dress is complete, it stands some eight or ten inches from the head, and consequently a term of years elapses before this odd ornament reaches perfection. In fact, a complete head-dress is never seen on any one under five-and-twenty.

The "chignon," if we may apply such a term to the head-dress, has four partings, one in front, one behind, and one at each side. Of course this elaborate ornament cannot be dressed by the owners, and, as a general rule, it is entrusted to professional hands, several women in every town making hair-dressing a regular business. After being arranged, the head is not touched for several months, when the structure is taken to pieces, and elaborately rebuilt, the fresh growth of hair being woven into it. The operation of taking down and rebuilding one of these towers is a very long and tedious one, and occupies a full day.

Four modes of arranging the tower, if it may be called so, prevail among the Ishogo. The ordinary plan is to raise it perpendicularly from the top of the head, so that at a distance it looks exactly as if the woman was carrying a cylindrical basket on her head. Sometimes, when the base of the tower is placed half way between the top of the head and the neck, the direction is diagonal, and when the hair at the back of the head is retained, the tower projects backwards and horizontally. These are the usual fashions; but some of the women wear, in addition to the tower, a tuft of hair, which is allowed to remain at each side of the head, and is trained into a ball just above the ear.

The dress of the Ishogo is "grass-cloth" of their own manufacture. They are celebrated for the soft and close texture of this cloth, which is, however, not made from grass, but from the cuticle of young palm-leaves, stripped off dexterously by the fingers. M. du Chailu gives the following account of the weavers:—

"In walking down the main street of Mokenga a number of ouandjas, or houses without walls, are seen, each containing four or five looms, with the weavers seated before them, weaving the cloth. In the middle of the ouandja a wood fire is seen burning, and the weavers, as you pass by, are sure to be seen smoking their pipes, and chatting to one another whilst going on with their work. The weavers are all men, and it is men also who stitch the 'bongos' together to make 'denguis' or robes of them. The stitches are not very close together, nor is the thread very fine, but the work is very neat and regular, and the needles are of their own manufacture.

"The bongos are very often striped, and sometimes made even in check patterns. This is done by their dyeing some of the threads of the warp, or of the warp and woof, with various simple colours. The dyes are all made of decoctions of different kinds of wood, except for black, when a kind of iron ore is used. The bongos are employed as money in this part of Africa."

Two of the words in this passage need explanation. The loom of the Ishogo is made as follows:—A bar of wood, about two feet in length, is suspended horizontally from the roof of the weaving hut, and over this bar are passed the threads which constitute the warp, their other ends being fastened to a corresponding bar below, which is fixed tightly down by a couple of forked sticks thrust into the ground. The alternate threads of the warp are divided by two slight rods, the ends of which are held in the fingers of the left hand, which cross them alternately, while the woof is interlaced by means of a sword-shaped shuttle, which also serves to strike it down and lay it regularly.

In consequence of this form of loom it is only possible to weave pieces of cloth of a limited length, and as these cloths are used as currency, they are all made of the same length. Each of these pieces is called a "bongo," and when two are sewn together they become "denguis."

The women are only allowed to wear two of these pieces of cloth, the size of the wearer not being taken into consideration. One is hung at each side, and the edges are joined before and behind, so that a large and fat woman presents a very absurd appearance, the pieces of cloth being too short to meet properly.

The Ishogos seldom go armed, and although they have spears, and bows and arrows, they do not carry them except when actually required. It is thought etiquette, however, for them to take their swords with them when they go to visit another village. They are a quiet and peaceful people, and although they have at hand the means of intoxicating themselves, they are remarkable for their sobriety, in which virtue they present a pleasing contrast to their noisy, quarrelsome, and intemperate neighbours, the Apone tribe.

The villages of the Ishogo tribe are often very large, containing two hundred or more huts. Each hut is, on an average, twenty-two feet in length, and ten or twelve feet in width, and is divided by partitions into three compartments. The mud walls are not quite five feet in height, and the top of the roof is about nine feet from the ground.

The doors are placed in the middle of the central compartment, and are very small, only a little more than two feet and a half in height, and are not hung on hinges, but turn in the middle on a couple of pivots, one at the top and the other at the bottom. Perhaps one reason for this diminutive size is, that the natives have no saws, and their only method of making a door is by felling the trunk of a tree, cutting it into the proper length, and laboriously chipping away the wood at each side. The doors are decorated with various devices, complicated and even elegant patterns being painted on them in red, black, and white, &c. Most of the houses have the outer surface of the walls covered with the bark of trees.

The furniture of these huts is scarcely equal to the excellence of the architecture. Hanging from the roof are a quantity of calabashes, which contain water, palm-wine, and oil, and are accompanied by plenty of cotton bags and cooking vessels. A well-furnished hut has also a number of plates and dishes, made either from reeds or from the rind of a plant called "astang," divided into strips, and against the walls are stored the bundles of palm fibres from which the bongos are woven. Tobacco is also stored within the hut, and is completely enveloped in leaves.

The usual form of a village is a single street, of great length, and sometimes exceedingly wide. The street of one village was fully a hundred yards in width, and was kept so neatly that not a single weed was to be seen in it,—a really remarkable fact when we remember the exceeding rapidity with which vegetation grows in this country.

Each village has at least one "palaver-house," while many have several. The "palaver-house" is more of a shed than a house, and consists chiefly of a roof and the posts which support it. In this house the men meet daily, to smoke, to hold trials, to receive strangers, and to indulge in that interminable gossip of which a relic still exists in the "discoursing" of Ireland.

There is also a temple, or M'buiti house, in which a kind of religious service is held, and which always contains a large wooden idol, which the people hold in great reverence. The proceedings within this edifice will be presently described.

In the middle of every Ishogo and Ashango village there is a single large tree, belonging to the genus *Ficus*. When the site of a village is first laid out, a sapling of this tree is planted, the prosperity of the future village being connected with it. If it should live and flourish, the new village will be prosperous; but if it should die, the place is abandoned and a new site chosen.

Some of the villages are distinguished by having two heads of the gorilla, one male and the other female, stuck on poles under the sacred tree, and M. du Chaillu learned afterwards that certain charms were buried at the root of the same tree.

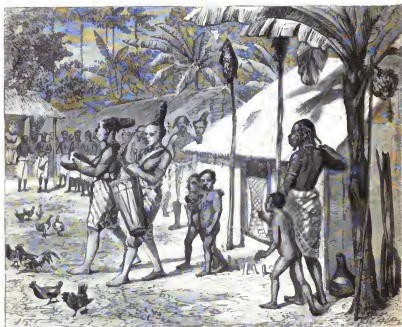
Among the Ishogos there is a very remarkable custom connected with the birth of twins. In many parts of the world twins are destroyed as soon as born, but in this country they are permitted to live, though under restrictions which tell much more severely on the mother than on her offspring.

The Ishogo have a vague kind of a notion that no woman ought to produce more than a single infant at a time, and that nature desires to correct the mistake by killing one of the children before it is able to take care of itself. After that time—i.e. when the children are about six years old—the balance of the births and deaths is supposed to be equalized, and no further precautions need be taken.

Therefore, as soon as twins are born, the house is marked off in some way so as to distinguish it. In one instance, mentioned by M. du Chaillu, two long poles were planted at each side of the door, a piece of cloth was hung over the entrance, and a row of white pegs driven into the ground just in front of the threshold. These marks are intended to warn strangers from entering the hut, as if any one except the children and their parents do so, the delinquent is seized and sold into slavery. The twins themselves

are not allowed to play with the other children, and even the very utensils and cooking-pots of the hut cannot be used.

In consequence of this curious law, there is nothing, next to being childless, which the women dread so much as having twins born to them, and nothing annoys an Ishogo woman so much as telling her that she is sure to have twins. Perhaps the most irritating restriction is that which forbids the woman to talk. She is allowed to go into the forest for firewood, and to perform such necessary household tasks, as otherwise she and her children must starve. But she is strictly forbidden to speak a word to any one who does not belong to her own family—a prohibition annoying enough to any one, but doubly so in Africa, where perpetual talk is almost one of the necessities of life.



THE CEREMONY OF M'PAZA.

At the expiration of the sixth year a ceremony takes place by which all parties are released from their long confinement, and allowed to enter the society of their fellows. At daybreak proclamation is made in the street, and two women, namely the mother and a friend, take their stand at the door of the hut, having previously whitened their legs and faces. They next march slowly down the village, beating a drum in time to the step, and singing an appropriate song. A general dance and feast then takes place, and lasts throughout the night, and after the ceremony is over, all restrictions are removed. This rite is called "M'paza," a word which both signifies twins and the ceremony by which they and their mother are set free from their imprisonment.

As in other parts of Africa, the natives have a way of keeping up their dancing and drumming and singing all night, partly on account of the coolness, and partly because they are horribly superstitious, and have an idea that evil spirits might hurt them under cover of the night, if they were not frightened away by the fires and noise.

One of these dances is called M'muirri, on account of the loud reverberating sound produced by their lips. It is properly a war-dance, and is performed by men alone. They form in line, and advance and retreat simultaneously, stamping so as to mark the time, beating their breasts, yelling, and making the reverberating sound which has been already mentioned. Their throats being apparently of brass and their lungs of leather, the Ishogo villagers keep up this horrid uproar throughout the night, without a moment's cessation, and those who are for the moment tired of singing, and do not own a drum, contribute their share to the general noise by clapping two pieces of wood together.

With all their faults, the Ishogos are a pleasant set of people, and M. du Chaillu, who lived with them, and was accompanied by Ishogos in his expedition, says that they are the gentlest and kindest-hearted negroes that he ever met. After his retreat from Ashango-land, which will next be mentioned, the Ishogos received him with even more than usual hospitality, arranged his journey westwards, and the whole population of the villages turned out of their houses and accompanied him a little distance on his way.

ASHANGO.

EASTWARD of the Ishogos is a people called the Ashango. They speak a different dialect from the Ishogo, and call themselves a different race, but their manners and customs are so similar to those of the Ishogos that a very brief account of them is all that is needed.

Ashango-land was the limit of M. du Chaillu's second expedition, which was suddenly brought to a close by a sad accident. The people had been rather suspicious of his motives, and harassed him in his camp, so that a few shots were fired in the air by way of warning. Unfortunately, one of the guns was discharged before it was raised, and the bullet struck an unfortunate man in the head, killing him instantly. The whole village flew to arms, the war-drum sounded, and the warriors crowded to the spot, with their barbed spears, and bows and poisoned arrows.

For a moment there was a lull: the interpreter, whose hand fired the unlucky shot, explained that it was an accident, and that the price of twenty men should be paid as compensation. Beads and cloth were produced, and one of the head-men had just assented to the proposal, when a loud wailing was heard, and a woman rushed out of a hut, announcing that the favourite wife of the friendly head-man had been killed by the same fatal bullet, which, after scattering the brains of the man, had passed through the thin walls of the hut, and killed the poor woman within.

After this announcement all hopes of peace were at an end; the husband naturally cried for vengeance; and, amid a shower of arrows, one of which struck the interpreter, and another nearly severed M. du Chaillu's finger, the party retreated as they best could, refraining from firing as long as they could, but at last being forced to fire in self-defence.

In order to escape as fast as they could, the porters were obliged to throw away the instruments, specimens of natural history, and photographs, so that the labour of months was lost, and scarcely anything except the journal was saved. Each village to which they came sent out its warriors against them. M. du Chaillu was dangerously wounded in the side, and had at last to throw away his best but heaviest rifle. It was only after the death of several of their number that the Ashangos perceived that they had to contend with a foe who was more than a match for them, and at last gave up the pursuit.

It was necessary, however, to conceal the fact of being wounded, for several of the tribes had an idea that their white visitor was invulnerable to spears and arrows, and it

was a matter of great consequence that such a notion should be encouraged. All kinds of wild rumours circulated about him: some saying that the Ashango arrows glanced off his body without hurting him, just as the Scotch believed that the bullets were seen nopping like hail off the body of Claverhouse; while others improved on the tale, and vowed that he had changed himself into a leopard, a gorilla, or an elephant, as the case might be, and under this strange form had attacked the enemies and driven them away.

The Ashangos are even better clothed than the Ishogos, wearing denguils of considerable size, and even clothing their children, a most unusual circumstance in Central Africa. The women wear hair-towers like those of the Ishogos, but do not seem to expend so much trouble upon them. They seem to lead tolerably happy lives, and indeed to have their own way in most things.

The Ashango warriors are well armed, carrying swords, spears, and poisoned arrows. The spear and arrow-heads and swords are not made by themselves, but by the Shimba and Ashangui tribes, who seem to be the acknowledged smiths in this part of the country. The sword is carried by almost every Ashango, and when one of these weapons is bought or sold, the transaction is always carried on in private.

Before the Ashangos go out to war, they have a sort of magical ceremony, called "Cooking the War-dish." The witch-doctor is summoned, and sets to work preparing a kind of porridge of all sorts of herbs and fetishes in an enormous pot. None but the warriors are allowed to see the preparation, and, when the mess is cooked, each warrior eats a portion. None of it is allowed to be left, and after they have all eaten, the remainder is rubbed over their bodies, until they have excited themselves to the necessary pitch of enthusiasm, when they rush out and at once proceed to the attack.

There are a number of minor ceremonies connected with food; one of which is, that the women are not allowed to eat goat-flesh or fowls, the probable reason being, according to M. du Chaillu, that the men want to eat these articles themselves.

In Ashango-land, as well as among the Ishogos, the temple, or idol-hut, is one of the most conspicuous buildings. Generally, the people did not like strangers to enter their temples, but in one village he succeeded in entering a temple, or M'buiti house, and seeing the strange worship which was conducted.

"This idol was kept at the end of a long, narrow, and low hut, forty or fifty feet long, and ten feet broad, and was painted in red, white, and black colours.

"When I entered the hut, it was full of Ashango people, ranged in order on each side, with lighted torches stuck in the ground before them. Amongst them were conspicuous two M'buiti men, or, as they might be called, priests, dressed in cloth of vegetable fibre, with their skins painted grotesquely in various colours, one side of the face red, the other white, and in the middle of the breast a broad yellow stripe; the circuit of the eyes was also daubed with paint. These colours are made by boiling various kinds of wood and mixing the decoction with clay.

"The rest of the Ashangos were also streaked and daubed with various colours, and by the light of their torches they looked like a troop of devils assembled in the lower regions to celebrate some diabolical rite; around their legs were bound white leaves from the heart of the palm-tree; some wore feathers, others had leaves twisted in the shape of horns behind their ears, and all had a bundle of palm-leaves in their hands.

"Soon after I entered, the rites began: all the men squatted down on their haunches, and set up a deafening kind of wild song. There was an orchestra of instrumental performers near the idol, consisting of three drummers with two drum-sticks each, one harper, and a performer on the sounding-stick, which latter did not touch the ground, but rested on two other sticks, so that the noise was made the more resonant. The two M'buiti men, in the meantime, were dancing in a fantastical manner in the middle of the temple, putting their bodies into all sorts of strange contortions. Every time the M'buiti men opened their mouths to speak, a dead silence ensued.

"As the ceremony continued, the crowd rose and surrounded the dancing-men, redoubling at the same time the volume of their songs, and, after this went on for some time, returning to their former positions. This was repeated several times. It seemed to me to be a kind of village feast.

"The M'buiti men, I ought to mention, had been sent for from a distance to officiate on the occasion, and the whole affair was similar to a rude sort of theatrical representation. The M'buiti men, like the witchcraft doctors, are important persons among these inland tribes; some have more reputation than others, but in general those who live furthest off are much esteemed. At length, wearied out with the noise, and being unable to see any meaning or any change in the performances, I returned to my hut at half-past ten."

Being exceedingly superstitious, the Ashangos generally thought that their white visitor was not a man but a spirit, as he could perform such wonders. He had a musical box, and set it playing, to the great consternation of the people. Their awe was increased by his leaving the box where it stood, and going away into the forest. The fact that the instrument should continue to play with no one near it was still more terrible, and a crowd of people stood round in dead silence—a very convincing proof of their awe-stricken state. An accordion produced even a greater sensation, and none but the chief dared to utter a sound. Even he was very much frightened, and continued beating his "kendo," or magic bell of office, and invoking help from the spirits of his ancestors.

This chief was a very pious man in his own fashion. He had a little temple or oratory of his own, and every morning and evening he repaired to the oratory, shut himself up, beat his bell, and invoked the spirits, and at night he always lighted a fire before beating the bell.

The "kendo" is a very remarkable badge of office. It is bell-shaped, something like that which is shown on page 513, fig. 2, but has a long iron handle bent in a hook-like shape, so that the "kendo" can be carried on the shoulder just as the axe is carried (see page 403). Leopard's fur is fastened to it, much to the deadening of the sound, and the whole instrument forms an emblem which is respected as much as the sceptre among ourselves. As the chief walks along, he rings the bell, which announces his presence by a sound like that of a common sheep or cow bell.

When M. du Chaillu was among the Ashango, scarcely any articles of civilized manufacture had penetrated into the country. The universal bead had reached them, and so had a few ornaments of brass. There was an article, however, which was sometimes found among them, and which was about the last that could be expected. It was the common black beer-bottle of England. These bottles have penetrated almost as far as the beads, and are exceedingly prized by the chiefs, who value no article of property more than a black bottle, which they sling to their belts, and in which they keep their plantain-wine.

Calabashes would, of course, answer their purpose better, being less fragile, but the black bottle is a chief's great ambition. Mostly, the wives do as they like; but if a wife should happen to break a bottle, she has committed an offence for which no pardon is expected.

The Ashangos have an odd custom of receiving a visitor. When they desire to do him particular honour, they meet him with some dishes of their red paint, with which he is expected to besmear himself. If a stranger approach a house, and the owner asks him to make himself red, he is quite happy, and if the pigment should not be offered, he will go off in dudgeon at the slight.

OBONGOS, OR BUSHMEN OF ASHANGO-LAND.

SOMEWHERE near the equatorial line, and between long. 11° and 12° E., there is a tribe of dwarfed negroes, called the Obongos, who seem to be among the very lowest of the human race, not only in stature, but in civilization.

The Obongos have no settled place of residence, their houses being simply huts made of branches, and constructed so slightly that no home interests can possibly attach to them. They are merely made of leafy boughs stuck in the ground, and are so slight that a whole village of Obongos will change its residence with scarcely a warning. The principal cause of abandonment seems to be summed up in the single word "vermin," with which the huts swarm to such an extent that, long after they have been abandoned, no one can enter without being covered with swarms of these offensive little insects.

The huts are merely made of green boughs, and the hole which serves as a door is closed with a smaller bough. They are scattered about without any order in the open space left among the trees.

The resemblance between the Obongos and the Bosjesmans of Southern Africa is really wonderful. Like them, the Obongos are short, though not ill-shaped, much lighter in hue than their neighbours, and have short hair growing in tufts, while the Ashangos are tall, dark, and have rather long bushy hair.

Their colour is pale yellow-brown, their foreheads narrow, and their cheek-bones high. The average height is about four feet seven inches, according to M. du Chaillu's measurements, though he found one woman who was considered very tall, and who was five feet and a quarter of an inch high. The men are remarkable for having their breasts and legs covered with hair, which grows in tufts like that of the head.

This diminutive stature is not entirely owing to the small size of the whole figure, but to the shortness of the legs, which, unlike those of African races in general, are very short in proportion to the size of the body. Thus, instead of looking like ordinary but well-shaped men seen through a diminishing glass, as is the case with the Bosjesman of Southern Africa, they have a dwarfish and stunted appearance, which, added to the hairy limbs of the men, gives them a weird and elfish appearance.

The dress of the Obongos—when they have any dress at all, which is seldom the case—consists entirely of old and worn-out denguiss, which are given to them by the Ashangos. Indeed, the Ashangos behave very kindly to these wretched little beings, and encourage them to take up their residence near villages, so that a kind of traffic can be carried on. Degraded as these little beings seem to be, they are skilful trappers, and take great quantities of game, the supplies of which they sell to the Ashangos for plantains, iron cooking-pots, and other implements. On one occasion M. du Chaillu saw a dozen Ashango women going to the huts of the Obongos, carrying on their heads plantains which they were about to exchange for game. The men had not returned from hunting, but, on seeing that the Obongo women were suffering from hunger, and forced to live on some very unwholesome-looking nuts, they left nearly all the plantains, and came away without the game.

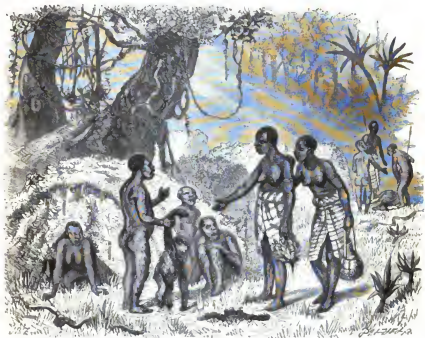
The woods in which they live are so filled with their traps that a stranger dares not walk in them, lest he should tumble into a pitfall which was constructed to catch the leopard, wild boar, or antelope, or have his legs caught in a trap which was laid for monkeys. There is not a path through the trees which does not contain a pitfall or two, and outside the path the monkey-traps are so numerous that even by daylight it is difficult to avoid them.

Being a wandering race, the Obongos never cultivate the ground, but depend for their food on the game which they take and on the roots, berries, and nuts which they find in

the woods. Animal food is coveted by them with astonishing eagerness, and a promise of goat's flesh will bribe an Obongo when even beads fail to touch him.

The origin of the Obongos is a mystery, and no one knows whether they are the aboriginal inhabitants of the soil, or whether they come from a distance. The probability is, that they were the original inhabitants, and that the Ashangos, being a larger and more powerful race, have gradually possessed themselves of that fertile land, whose capabilities were wasted by the nomad and non-labouring Obongos.

It is strange that they should have retained their individuality throughout so long a period, in which phenomenon they present a curious resemblance to the gipsies of Europe, who have for centuries been among us, though not of us. The Obongos never marry out of



OBONGO MARKET.

their own tribe, and as they live in little communities of ten or twelve huts, it is evident that they can have but little matrimonial choice. Indeed, the Ashangos say that the ties of kinship are totally neglected, and that the Obongos permit marriages to take place between brothers and sisters. This circumstance may perhaps account for their dwarfed stature.

They are a timid people, and when M. du Chaillu visited them he could hardly catch a sight of them, as they all dashed into the wood as soon as they saw the stranger. It was with the greatest difficulty that he succeeded in intercepting several women and some children, and by presents of beads and promises of meat conciliating some of them, and inducing them to inspire confidence in their comrades. One little old woman named Misounda, who was at first very shy, became quite confident, and began to laugh at the men for running away. She said that they were as timid as the squirrel, which cried

"Qué, Qué," and squeaked in imitation of the animal, at the same time twisting her odd little body into all sorts of droll contortions, intended to represent the terror of her frightened companions.

When an Obongo dies, it is usual to take the body to a hollow tree in the forest, and drop it into the hollow, which is afterwards filled to the top with earth, leaves, and branches. Sometimes, however, they employ a more careful mode of burial. They take the body to some running stream, the course of which has been previously diverted. A deep grave is dug in the bed of the stream, the body placed in it, and covered over carefully. Lastly, the stream is restored to its original course, so that all traces of the grave are soon lost. This remarkable custom is not peculiar to the Obongos, but has existed in various parts of the world from the earliest known time.



DAGGER AND SHEATH (Central Africa).

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE APONO AND APINGI TRIBES.

LOCALITY OF THE APONO TRIBE—THEIR LIVELY CHARACTER—DRESS AND ORNAMENT—THE GIANT DANCE—WRAPONS—APONO ARCHITECTURE—RELIGION AND SUPERSTITION—SICKNESS, DEATH, AND BURIAL—AN APONO LEGEND—THE APINGI TRIBE—THEIR GENERAL APPEARANCE AND MODE OF DRESS—SKILL IN WEAVING—DEXTERITY AS BOATMEN—SCENE ON THE REMBO—CURIOUS MATRIMONIAL ARRANGEMENT—SLAVERY AMONG THE APINGI—A HUNTER'S LEOPARD-CHASE—FUNERAL CUSTOMS.

PROCEEDING towards the western coast of Africa, we now came to the Apono tribe, which now hit a district just below the Equator, and between long. 11° and 12° E.

They are a merry race, and carry to excess the African custom of drumming, dancing, and singing throughout the entire night. Drinking, of course, forms a chief part of the amusements of the night, the liquid used being the palm-wine, which is made in great quantities in many parts of tropical Africa. Perhaps the innate good nature of the Apono people was never shown to greater advantage than on one occasion when M. du Chaillu determined to stop the revelry that cost him his repose at night and the services of his intoxicated porters by day. He did so by the very summary process of going to the hut where the feast was held, kicking over the vessels of palm-wine, and driving the chiefs and their attendants out of the hut. They were certainly vexed at the loss of so much good liquor, but contented themselves with a grumble, and then obeyed orders.

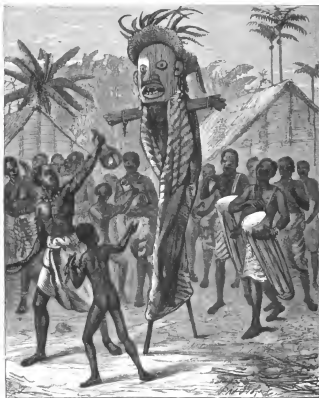
The Aponos proved to be very honest men, according to the African ideas of honesty; and, from M. du Chaillu's account, did not steal his property, and always took his part in the numberless squabbles with different chiefs.

They are not pleasing in appearance, not so much from actual ugliness of feature, but from their custom of disfiguring themselves artificially. In the first place, they knock out the two middle teeth of the upper jaw, and file all the rest to sharp points. Tattooing is carried on to a considerable extent, especially by the women, who have a habit of raising little elevated scars in their foreheads, sometimes arranged in the form of a diamond, and situated between the eyes. Several marks are made on the cheeks, and a few on the chest and abdomen.

The dress of the Aponos resembles that of the Ishogo tribe, and is made of grass-cloth. The men wear the denguis or mantles, composed of several grass-cloths sewn together, while the women are restricted to two, one of which is attached on either side, and made to meet in the back and front if they can. While the women are young, the dress is amply sufficient, but when they become old and fat, the cloths, which are always of uniform size, cannot be made to meet by several inches. However, the dress in question is that which is sanctioned by ordinary custom, and the Aponos are perfectly satisfied with it.

The palm-wine which has just been mentioned is made by the Aponos in a very simple manner. When the fruit is nearly ripe, the natives climb the trees and hang

hollowed gourds under the fruits for the purpose of receiving the precious liquor. They are so fond of this drink, that even in the early morning they may be seen climbing the trees and drinking from the suspended calabashes. During the season the Apono people are constantly intoxicated, and, in consequence, are apt to be quarrelsome and lazy, willing to take offence at any slight, whether real or imagined, and to neglect the duties which at other times of the year they are always ready to perform.



THE GIANT DANCE.

Fortunately for themselves, the palm-wine season only lasts for a few months, and during the remainder of the year the Aponos are perforce obliged to be sober. While it lasts, the country is most unpleasant to a stranger, the sound of the drum, the dance, and the song scarcely ever ceasing night or day, while the people are so tetchy and quarrelsome that a day never passes without a fight, which often leaves considerable scars behind it.

One of their dances is very peculiar, and is called by the name of Ocuya, or Giant Dance.

This curious dance is performed by a man who enacts the part of the giant, and raises himself to the necessary height by means of stilts. He then induces a wicker-work frame, shaped like the body of a man, and dressed like one of the natives, in large grass-cloths. The dress reaches to the ground, so as to conceal the stilts, and, in spite of this drawback, the performer walks and dances as if he were using his unaided feet.

Of course he wears a mask, and this mask is mostly of a white colour. It has large, thick lips, and a mouth partly open, showing the gap in which the upper incisor teeth had once existed. The head-dress is much like a lady's bonnet of 1864 or 1865. The material of which it is made is monkey-skin, and it is ornamented with feathers.

The Aponos are not distinguished as warriors, their weapons being very formidable in appearance, and very inefficient in practice. Each Apono has his bow and arrows. The former is a stiff, cumbrous kind of weapon. They are bent nearly in a semicircle, the string being nearly two feet from the centre of the bow. The string is of vegetable fibre. The arrows are ingeniously armed with triangular iron heads, each being attached to a hollow neck, through which the shaft passes loosely. The head is poisoned, and when it penetrates the flesh it remains fixed in the wound, while the shaft falls to the ground, just as is the case with the Bosjesman arrows already described.

Their spears are also rather clumsy, and are too heavy to be thrown. They are, however, rather formidable in close combat. The weapon which is most coveted by the Apono tribe is a sort of sword, or rather scimitar, with a wooden handle and a boldly curved blade. An ambitious young Apono is never happy until he has obtained one of these scimitars, and such a weapon, together with a handsome cap and a well-made "dengui," will give a man a most distinguished appearance among his fellows. Although the curved form is most common, some of these swords are straight, and are not made by themselves, but by the Abombos and Iljavis, who live to the east of them. The blade of this weapon is four feet in length, and the handle is shaped like a dice-box, the "tang" of the blade running through it and being clenched on the end of the hilt. A similar form of handle is seen in the left-hand figure on page 492.

From the same tribes they procure their anvils, which are too large for their resources; their only melting-pots being scarcely able to hold more than a pint of iron ore. The shields of the Apono are circular and made of basket-work.

The villages of the Apono are well and neatly built. One of them, belonging to Nchiengain, the principal chief of the Apono tribe, was measured by M. du Chaillu, and found to consist of one long street, nearly four hundred and fifty yards long, and eighteen yards wide. The houses were all separated by an interval, and each house was furnished with a little verandah in front, under which the inhabitants sit and smoke their pipes, eat their meals, and enjoy a chat with their neighbours.

The material of the houses is chiefly bamboo and strips of the leaf-stalks of palm-trees, and the average height of a hut is about seven feet.

One of the villages, named Mokaba, deserved the name of a town, and was arranged in a somewhat different manner. The houses were arranged in three parallel rows, forming one wide principal street in the middle, and a narrow street on either side. The houses are arranged in hollow squares, each square belonging to one family. As often as a man marries a fresh wife, he builds a separate house for her, and all these new houses are arranged in the form of a quadrangle, the empty space being planted with palm-trees, which are the property of the head-man of each group, and which pass at his death to his heir. These palm-trees are valuable property, and are especially prized as furnishing material for the palm-wine which the Apono tribe drink to such an extent.

Superstition is as rife among the Aponos as among other tribes which have been mentioned, and preserves its one invariable characteristic, *i.e.* an ever-present fear of evil. When M. du Chaillu visited them, they were horribly afraid of such a monster as a white man, and jumped to the conclusion that any one who was unlike themselves must be both evil and supernatural.

It was with some difficulty that the chief Nchiengain was induced to allow the travellers to pass through his territories; and even after permission had been granted, it was thought better to send a man who was the personal friend of the chief, and who would

serve to calm the fears with which he regarded the approach of his visitors. There was certainly some reason for his fear, for, by some unfortunate mischance, the small-pox swept through the country during the time of M. du Chaillu's travels, and it was very natural that the people should think that the white stranger was connected with the disease.

When, at last, the traveller entered the Apono village, there was a general consternation, the men running away as fast as their legs could carry them, and the women fleeing to their huts, clasping their children in their arms, and shrieking with terror. The village was, in fact, deserted, in spite of the example set by the chief, who, although as much frightened as any of his subjects, bore in mind the responsibilities of his office, and stood in front of his house to receive his visitor. In order to neutralize as much as possible the effects of the white man's witchery, he had hung on his neck, body, and limbs all the fetiches which he possessed, and had besides covered his body with mysterious lines of alumbi chalk. Thus fortified, he stood in front of his hut, accompanied by two men, who bravely determined to take part with their chief in his perilous adventure.

At first Nchiengain was in too great a fright to look at his visitor, but before very long he ventured to do so, and accept some presents. Afterwards, when he had got over the fear with which he regarded the white man, he acted after the fashion of all African chiefs, i.e. he found all sorts of excuses for not furnishing his guests with guides and porters; the real object being to keep in his hands the wonderful white man who had such inexhaustible treasures at command, and who might make him the richest and most powerful chief in the country.

The idols of the Apono tribe are hideously ugly. When M. du Chaillu was in Apono-land, he naturally wished to bring home a specimen of a native idol, and after some trouble induced Nchiengain to present him with a specimen. The chief obligingly sent his wife to the temple to fetch an idol, which he generously presented to his guest. It was a wooden image, so large that the woman could scarcely carry it, and was of such a character that it could not possibly be exhibited in Europe.

These people seem to possess inventive faculties of no small extent, if we may judge from a strange legend that was told by one of them.

According to this tale, in former times there was a great chief called Redjiona, the father of a beautiful girl called Arondo. He was very fond of this daughter, and would not allow any one to marry her, unless he promised that, if his daughter died before her husband, he should die with her and be buried in the same grave. In consequence of this announcement, no one dared to ask for Arondo's hand, and she remained unmarried for several years.

At last a suitor showed himself, in the person of a man named Akenda Mbani. This name signifies "he who never goes twice to the same place;" and he had taken it in consequence of a law or command of his father, that he must never go twice to the same place. He married Arondo, and, being a mighty hunter, he brought home plenty of game; but if he had by chance killed two large animals, such as antelopes or boars, together, he brought home one, and made his father-in-law fetch the other, on the plea that he could not go twice to the same place.

After some years Arondo was taken ill with a headache, which became worse and worse until she died, and, according to agreement, Akenda Mbani died with her. As soon as she was dead, her father gave orders to prepare a large grave for the husband and wife. In the grave was placed the bed of the married pair, on which their bodies were laid, and they were accompanied by a slave killed to wait on them in the land of spirits, and by much wealth in the shape of ivory, plates, mats, and ornaments. Akenda Mbani was also furnished with his sword, spear, and hunting-bag. The grave was then filled up, and a mound of sand heaped upon it.

When Agambouai, the village orator, saw these arrangements, he disapproved of them, and told Redjiona that the hyenas would scratch up the mound of sand, and devour the bodies of his daughter and her husband. So Redjiona ordered the grave to be made so deep that the hyenas could not get at the bodies.

Accordingly, the sand was removed, and the bodies of Akenda Mbani and his wife were seated on stools while the grave was deepened. When it was deep enough, the

people replaced the bed, and lowered the slave and Arondo into the grave. They then proceeded to place Akenda Mbani by her, but he suddenly revived, and declined to take his place in the grave a second time, on the ground that he never went twice to the same place. Redjiona was very angry at this, but admitted the validity of the excuse, and consoled himself by cutting off the head of Agambouai.

THE APINGI.

PASSING westward toward the coast, we come to the APINGI tribe. These people inhabit a tolerably large track of country, and extend along the west side of a range of hills which separates them from the Ishogo.

The Apingi are not a handsome race. Their skin is black, with a decided tinge of yellow, but this lightness of hue may probably be owing to the mountainous regions which they inhabit. They wear the usual grass-cloth round the waist, and the women are restricted to two of the squares, each twenty-four inches long by eighteen wide, as is the custom throughout a large portion of West Africa. They do not, however, look on clothing in the same light as we do, and so the scantiness of their apparel is of no consequence to them.

This was oddly shown by the conduct of the head wife of Remandji, an Apingi chief. She came with her husband to visit M. du Chailu, who presented her with a piece of light-coloured cotton cloth. She was delighted with the present, and, much to her host's dismay, proceeded to disrobe herself of her ordinary dress, in order to indue the new garment. But, when she had laid aside the grass-cloth petticoat, some object attracted her attention, and she began to inspect it, forgetting all about her dress, chattering and looking about her for some time before she bethought herself of her cotton robe, which she put on quite leisurely.

This woman was rather good-looking, but, as a rule, the Apingi women are exceedingly ugly, and do not improve their beauty by the custom of filing the teeth, and covering themselves with tattooing. This practice is common to both sexes, but the women are fond of one pattern, which makes them look much as if they wore braces, a broad band of tattooed lines passing over each shoulder, and meeting in a V-shape on the breast. From the point of the V, other lines are drawn in a curved form upon the abdomen, and a similar series is carried over the back. The more of these lines a woman can show, the better dressed she is supposed to be.

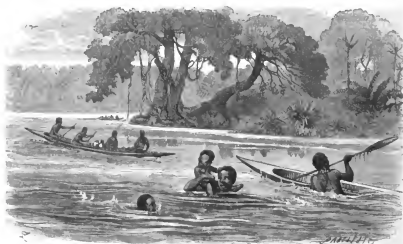
The grass-cloths above-mentioned are all woven by the men, who can make them either plain or coloured. A square of the former kind is a day's work to an Apingi, and a coloured cloth requires from two to three days' labour. But the Apingi, like other savages, is a very slow workman, and has no idea of the determined industry with which an European pursues his daily labour. Time is nothing to him, and whether a grass-cloth takes one or two days' labour is a matter of perfect indifference. He will not dream of setting to work without his pipe, and always has his friends about him, so that he may lighten the labours of the loom by social converse. Generally, a number of looms are set up under the projecting eaves of the houses, so that the weavers can talk as much as they like with each other.

The Apingi are celebrated as weavers, and are said to produce the best cloths in the country. They are held in such estimation that they are sold even on the coast, and are much used as mosquito curtains. The men generally wear a robe made of eight or nine squares.

Barter, and not personal use, is the chief object in making these cloths, the Apingi thinking that their tattooing is quite enough clothing for all social purposes. Indeed, they

openly say that the tattooing is their mode of dress, and that it is quite as reasonable as covering up the body and limbs with a number of absurd garments, which can have no object but to restrain the movements. Sometimes the Apingi wear a cloth over one shoulder, but this is used as a sign of wealth, and not intended as dress.

Like most tribes which live on the banks of rivers, the Apingi, who inhabit the district watered by the Rembo river, are clever boatmen, and excellent swimmers. The latter accomplishment is a necessity, as the canoes are generally very small and frail, flat-bottomed, and are easily capsized. They draw scarcely any water, this structure being needful on account of the powerful stream of the Rembo, which runs so swiftly that even these practised paddlers can scarcely make more than three or four miles an hour against the stream.



RIVER SCENE ON THE REMBO

When M. du Chaillu was passing up the Rembo, he met with an accident that showed the strength of the current. An old woman was paddling her boat across the stream, but the light bark was swept down by the stream, and dashed against that of Du Chaillu, so that both upset. As for the old woman, who had a bunch of plantains in her boat, she thought of nothing but her fruit, and swam down the stream bawling out lustily, "Where are my plantains? Give me my plantains!" She soon captured her canoe, took it ashore, emptied out the water, and paddled off again, never ceasing her lamentations about her lost bunch of plantains.

There is a curious matrimonial law among the Apingi, which was accidentally discovered by M. du Chaillu. A young man, who had just married the handsomest woman in the country, showed all the marks of poverty, even his grass-cloth dress being ragged and worn out. On being asked the reason of his shabby appearance, he pointed to his young wife, and said that she had quite ruined him. On further interrogation, it was shown that among the Apingi, if a man fell in love with the wife of a neighbour, and she reciprocated the affection, the lover might purchase her from the husband, who was bound to sell her for the same price that he originally paid for her. In the present instance, so large a sum had been paid for the acknowledged belle of the country that the lover had been obliged to part with all his property before he could secure her.

As is often the case in Africa, the slaves are treated very well by their masters. Should a slave be treated harshly, he can at any time escape by means of a curious and most humane law. He finds an opportunity of slipping away, and goes to another village, where he chooses for himself a new master. This is done by "beating bongo," i.e. by laying the hands on the head and saying, "Father, I wish to serve you. I choose you for my master, and will never go back to my old master." Such an offer may not be refused, neither can the fugitive slave be reclaimed, unless he should return to the village which he left.

The Apingi are very fond of palm-wine, and, like other neighbouring tribes, hang calabashes in the trees for the purpose of receiving the juice. Being also rather selfish, they mostly visit their palm-trees in the early morning, empty the calabashes into a vessel, and then go off into the woods and drink the wine alone, lest some acquaintance should happen to see them, and ask for a share.

Hospitality is certainly one of the virtues of the Apingi tribe. When M. du Chailin visited them, the chief Remandji presented him with food, the gift consisting of fowls, cassava, plantains, and a young slave. The latter article was given in accordance with the ordinary negro's idea, that the white men are cannibals, and purchase black men for the purpose of eating them. "Kill him for your evening meal," said the hospitable chief; "he is tender and fat, and you must be hungry." And so deeply was the idea of cannibalism implanted in his mind, that nothing would make this really estimable gentleman comprehend that men could possibly be wanted as labourers, and not as articles of food.

However, a very fair meal (*minus* the slave) was prepared, and when it was served up, Remandji appeared, and tasted every dish that was placed before his guests. He even drank a little of the water as it was poured out, this custom being followed throughout the tribe, the wives tasting the food set before their husbands, and the men that which they offer to their guests. It is singular to see how ancient and universal is the office of "taster," and how a custom which still survives in European courts as a piece of state ceremonial is in active operation among the savage tribes of Western Africa.

The religious, or rather the superstitious, system of the Apingi differs little from that which we have seen in other districts, and seems to consist chiefly in a belief in fetishes, and charms of various kinds.

For example, when M. du Chailin told Remandji that he would like to go on a leopard hunt, the chief sent for a sorcerer, or "ounganga," who knew a charm which enabled him to kill any number of leopards without danger to himself. The wizard came, and went through his ceremonies, remarking that the white man might laugh as much as he please, but that on the next day he would see that his charm (*monda*) would bring a leopard.

On the following morning he started into the woods, and in the afternoon returned with a fine leopard which he had killed. He asked such an exorbitant price for the skin that the purchase was declined, and the skin was therefore put to its principal use, namely, making fetish belts for warriors. A strip of skin is cut from the head to the tail, and is then charmed by the ounganga, whose incantations are so powerful that neither bullet, arrow, nor spear, can wound the man who wears the belt. Of course such a belt commands a very high price, which accounts for the unwillingness of the sorcerer to part with the skin.

As is usual in many parts of the world, when twins are born, one of them is killed, as an idea prevails that, if both are allowed to live, the mother will die. Only one case was known where twins, boys seven years of age, were allowed to survive, and, as their mother did not die, she was respected as a very remarkable woman.

Seeing the treasures which their white visitor brought among them, the Apingi could not be disabused of the notion that he made, or rather created, them all himself, and that he was able, by his bare word, to make unlimited quantities of the same articles. One day a great consultation was held, and about thirty chiefs, with Remandji at their head, came and preferred the modest request that the white man would make a pile of beads as high as the tallest tree, and another of guns, powder, cloth, brass kettles, and copper

rods. Nothing could persuade them that such a feat was impossible, and the refusal to perform the expected miracle was a severe disappointment to the Apingi chiefs, who had come from great distances, each bringing with him a large band of followers. There was even an Ashango chief, who had come from his own country, more than a hundred miles to the eastward, bringing with him a strong party of men to carry away his share of the goods.

This scene appears to have made a great impression on the natives, for when Remandji and his son died, an event which happened not long after Du Chaillu had left the country, the people firmly believed that the latter had killed him on account of his friendship for him, desiring that they should be companions in the spirit land, which they believed was the ordinary habitation of white men.

Their burial customs are rather curious, and not at all agreeable. The body is left in the house where the sick person has died, and is allowed to remain there as long as it can hold together. At last, the nearest relation of the deceased comes and carries off the body on his shoulders, bearing it to some convenient spot at a little distance from the village. No grave is dug, but the corpse is laid on the ground, some pieces of ivory or a few personal ornaments are laid by it, and the funeral ceremony is at an end.



DAGGER.—(Central Africa.)

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE BAKALAI.

DISTRICTS INHABITED BY THE BAKALAI—THEIR ROVING AND UNSETTLED HABITS—SKILL IN HUNTING—DIET AND MODE OF COOKING—A FISH BATTLE—CLEANLY HABITS OF THE BAKALAI—FORBIDDEN MEATS—CRUEL TREATMENT OF THE SICK, AND SUPERSTITIONS OF THE BAKALAI—THEIR IDOLS—THE WOMEN AND THEIR RELIGIOUS RITES—AN INTRUSION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES—THE “KEEN” OVER A DEAD PERSON.

THE large and important tribe of the Bakalai inhabit a considerable tract of country between the Equator and 2° S., and long. 10° to 13° E.

The land in which they dwell is not tenanted by themselves alone, but they occupy so much space in it that it may fairly be called by their name. They have a peculiar faculty for colonization, and have extended their settlements in all directions, some being close to the western coast, and others far to the east of the Ashangos. Of course, their habits differ according to the kind of country in which they are placed, but in all situations they are bold and enterprising, and never fail to become masters of the district.

One clan or branch of this tribe, however, has abandoned these roving habits, and has settled permanently at a place called Obindji, after the chief of the clan. Being conveniently situated at the junction of the Onenga and Ofouboa rivers, Obindji has a commanding position for trade, and, having contracted an alliance with the great chief Quengueza, carries on a prosperous commerce, chony being their special commodity. In concluding his alliance with them, Quengueza showed his wisdom by insisting upon their maintaining peace with all their neighbours, this indeed having been his policy throughout his life.

When Du Chaillu was passing along the Rembo river, Quengueza addressed the porters who carried the goods, and gave them excellent advice, which, if they would only have followed it, would have kept them clear of many subsequent quarrels and misfortunes. He advised them never to pick up hunches of plantain or nuts that might be lying on the road, because those objects were only placed as a bait. Also, if told to catch and kill goats or fowls, or to pluck fruit, they were to refuse, saying that it was the duty of the host to supply the food, and not to set his guests to fetch it for themselves. They were specially enjoined not to enter other houses but those allotted to them, not to sit on strange seats, and to keep clear of the women.

Obindji's town showed clearly the character of the inhabitants. Bound to keep the peace by the treaty with Quengueza, they were still prepared against the incursions of inimical tribes. Usually, the houses are made of hamboo, but those of Obindji had regular walls, made of broad strips of bark lashed firmly to the bamboo uprights. When the house is made of hamboo alone, the inhabitants can be seen nearly as well as if they were birds in cages, and consequently the enemy can shoot at them between the bars. In Obindji, however, the houses were not only defended by the bark walls, but were further guarded by being separated into two rooms, the inner chamber being that in

which the family sleep. So suspicious are they, that they never spread the couch on the same spot for two successive nights.

Their great ambition seems to be the possession of the rivers, by means of which they can traverse the country, make raids, or plant new settlements in any promising spot. Thus all along the great river Rembo are found districts inhabited by Bakalai, and each of the settlements is sure to be the parent of other colonies on either bank. Moreover, they are of strangely nomad habits, settling down for a time, and then suddenly breaking up their village, taking away what portable stores they can carry, abandoning the rest, and settling down like a flight of locusts in some fresh spot. The causes for this enrious habit are several, but superstition is at the bottom of them all, as will be seen when we come to that branch of the subject.

The complexion of the Bakalai is dark, but not black, and, as a rule, they are of fair height and well made. They wear the usual grass-cloth as long as they cannot procure American or European goods, but, whenever they can purchase a piece of cotton print, they will wear it as long as it will hang together. Of washing it they seem to have no conception, and to rags they have no objection.

Neither do the Bakalai wash themselves. Those who live on the banks of the river swim like ducks, and, as their aquatic excursions often end in a capsize, they are perforce washed in the stream. But washing in the light of ablution is never performed by them, and those who live inland, and have no river, never know the feeling of water on their oily bodies.

On account of their migratory habits, they have but little personal property, concentrating all their wealth in the one article of wives. A Bakalai will go to hunt, an art in which he is very expert, and will sell the tusks, skins, and horns for European goods. As soon as he has procured this wealth, he sets off to buy a new wife with it, and is not very particular about her age, so that she be young. A girl is often married when quite a child, and in that case she lives with her parents until she has reached the marriageable age, which in that country is attained at a very early period.

In consequence of this arrangement, children are eagerly expected, and joyfully welcomed when they make their appearance. As a rule, African women are not prolific mothers, so that a wife who has several children is held in the highest estimation as the producer of valuable property, and carries things with a high hand over her husband and his other wives. The ideas of consanguinity are very enrious among the Bakalai. A man will not marry a wife who belongs to the same village or clan as himself, and yet, if a man dies, his son takes his wives as a matter of course, and, if he has no son old enough to do so, they pass to his brother.

Slaves also constitute part of a Bakalai's property, and are kept, not so much for the purpose of doing their master's work, which is little enough, but as live stock, to be sold to the regular slave-dealers whenever a convenient opportunity may occur.

The principal food of the Bakalai is the cassava or manioc, which is prepared so that it passes into the acid state of fermentation, and becomes a sour, but otherwise flavourless mess. The chief advantage of this mode of preparation is, that it will keep from six weeks or two months, and at the end of that time is no nastier than it was when comparatively fresh. They have also a singularly unpleasant article of diet called njavi oil. It is made from the seeds of the njavi, one of the large forest trees of the country, and is prepared by first boiling the seed, then crushing it on a board, and lastly squeezing out the oil in the hand. Much oil is wasted by this primitive process, and that which is obtained is very distasteful to European palates, the flavour resembling that of scorched lard. It is chiefly used in cooking vegetables, and is also employed for the hair, being mixed with an odoriferous powder, and plastered liberally on their woolly heads. It is principally with this oil that the skin is anointed, a process which is really usefull for those who wear no clothing in such a climate. Palm oil is sometimes employed for the same purpose, but it is too dear to be in general use.

Even the natives cannot endure a very long course of this manioc, and, when they have been condemned to eat nothing but vegetable food for several weeks, have a positive craving for meat, and will do anything to procure it.

This craving after animal food sometimes becomes almost a disease. It is known by the name of Gouamba, and attacks both white and black men alike. Quengueza himself was occasionally subject to it, and was actually found weeping with the agony of gouamba, a proceeding which seems absurd and puerile to those who have never been subjected to the same affliction. Those who suffer from it become positive wild beasts at the sight of meat, which they devour with an eagerness that is horrible to witness. Even M. du Chaillu, with all his guns and other means of destroying game, occasionally suffered from gouamba, which he describes as "real and frightful torture."

The Bakalai do not think of breeding their goats and chickens for food, their wandering habits precluding them from either agriculture or pastoral habits, and they are obliged, therefore, to look to fishing and hunting for a supply of animal food.



FISHING SCENE.

The former of these pursuits is principally carried on during the dry season, when the waters of the river have receded, and pools have been left on the plains. To those pools the Bakalai proceed in numbers, men, women, and children taking part in the work. Each is furnished with a pot or bowl, with which they bale out the water until the fish are left struggling in the mud. The whole party then rush in, secure the fish, and take them home, when a large portion is consumed on the spot, but the greater quantity dried in the smoke and laid up for future stores.

Savages as they are, the Bakalai are very cleanly in their cooking, as is mentioned by M. du Chaillu. "The Bakalai were cooking a meal before setting out on their travels. It is astonishing to see the neatness with which these savages prepare their food. I watched some women engaged in boiling plantains, which form the bread of all this region. One built a bright fire between two stones. The others peeled the plantains, then carefully washed them—just as a clean white cook would—and, cutting them in several pieces, put them in the earthen pot. This was then filled with water, covered over with leaves, over which were placed the banana peelings, and then the pot was put on the stones to boil. Meat they had not, but roasted a few ground-nuts instead; but the boiled plantains they ate with great quantities of Cayenne pepper." From this last circum-

stance, it is evident that the Bakalai do not share in the superstitious notion about red pepper which has been lately mentioned.

With all this cleanliness in cooking, they are so fond of animal food that they will eat it when almost falling to pieces with decomposition. And, in spite of their love for it, there is scarcely any kind of meat which is not prohibited to one family or another, or at all events to some single individual. For example, when one of the party has shot a wild hull (*Bos brachyceros*), their principal chief or king refused to touch the flesh, saying that it was "roonda," or prohibited to himself and his family, because, many generations back, a woman of his family had given birth to a calf. Another family was prohibited from eating the flesh of the crocodile, for similar reasons.

So careful are the Bakalai on this subject that even their love for meat fails before their dread of the "roonda," and a man will sooner die of starvation than eat the prohibited food. Of course, this state of things is singularly inconvenient. The kindred prohibitions of Judaism and Mahometanism are trying enough, especially to travellers, who cannot expect any great choice of food. But, as in the latter cases, the prohibited articles are invariably the same, there is little difficulty about the commissariat.

Among the Bakalai, however, if the traveller should happen to employ a party of twenty men, he may find that each man has some "roonda" which will not permit him to join his comrades at their repast. One man, for example, may not eat monkey's flesh, while another is prohibited to eat pork, and a third is forbidden to touch the hippopotamus, or some other animal. So strict is the law of "roonda," that a man will often refuse to eat anything that has been cooked in a kettle which may once have held the forbidden food.

This brings us naturally to other superstitions, in which the Bakalai seem to be either peculiarly rich, or to have betrayed more of their religious system than strangers can generally learn from savages.

The usual amount of inconsistency is found in their religion, if we may dignify with such a name a mere string of incongruous superstitions. In the first place, there is nothing which they dread so much as death, which they believe to be the end of all life; and yet they have a nearly equal fear of ghosts and spirits, which they believe to haunt the woods after dark.

This fear of death is one of their principal inducements to shift their dwellings. If any one dies in a village, Death is thought to have taken possession of the place, and the inhabitants at once abandon it, and settle down in another spot. The prevalence of this idea is the cause of much cruelty towards the sick and infirm, who are remorselessly driven from the villages, lest they should die, and so bring death into the place.

M. du Chaillu gives a very forcible illustration of this practice. "I have twice seen old men thus driven out, nor could I persuade any one to give comfort and shelter to these friendless wretches. Once, an old man, poor and naked, lean as death himself, and barely able to walk, hobbled into a Bakalai village, where I was staying. Seeing me, the poor old fellow came to beg some tobacco—their most cherished solace. I asked him where he was going.

" 'I don't know.'

" 'Where are you from?'

" 'He mentioned a village a few miles off.

" 'Have you no friends there?'

" 'None.'

" 'No son, no daughter, no brother, no sister?'

" 'None.'

" 'You are sick?'

" 'They drove me away for that.'

" 'What will you do?'

" 'Die!'

" A few women came up to him and gave him, water and a little food, but the men saw death in his eyes. They drove him away. He went sadly, as though knowing and

submitting to his fate. A few days after, his poor lean body was found in the wood. His troubles were ended."

This is the "noble savage," whose unsophisticated virtues have been so often lauded by those have never seen him, much less lived with him.

The terror which is felt at the least suspicion of witchcraft often leads to bloody and cruel actions. Any one who dies a natural death, or is killed by violence, is thought to have been bewitched, and the first object of his friends is to find out the sorcerer. There was in a Bakalai village a little boy, ten years of age, who was accused of sorcery. The mere accusation of a crime which cannot be disproved is quite enough in this land, and the population of the village rushed on the poor little boy, and cut him to pieces with their knives. They were positively mad with rage, and did not cool down for several hours afterwards.

The prevalence of this superstition was a sad trial to M. du Chaillu when he was seized with a fever. He well knew that his black friends would think that he had been bewitched, and, in case of his death, would be sure to pounce upon some unlucky wretch, and put him to a cruel death as a wizard. Indeed, while he was ill one of his men took up the idea of witchcraft, and at night paraded the village, threatening to kill the sorcerer who had bewitched his master.

Idolatry is carried on here, as in most heathen countries, by dancing, drumming, and singing, neither the songs nor dances being very decent in their character.

One of the chief idols of the Bakalai was in the keeping of Mbango, the head of a clan. The image is made of wood, and represents a grotesque female figure, nearly of the size of life. Her eyes are copper, her feet are cloven like those of a deer, one cheek is yellow, the other red, and a necklace of leopard's teeth hangs round her neck. She is a very powerful idol, speaks on great occasions, and now and then signifies approbation by nodding her head. Also she eats meat when it is offered to her, and, when she has exhibited any of those tokens of power, she is taken into the middle of the street, so that all the people may assemble and feast their eyes on the wooden divinity.

Besides the ordinary worship of the idol, the women have religious ceremonies of their own, which strangely remind the reader of the ancient mysteries related by sundry classic authors. To one of these ceremonies M. du Chaillu became a spectator in rather an unexpected manner.

"One day the women began their peculiar worship of Njambai, which it seems is their good spirit: and it is remarkable that all the Bakalai clans and all the females of tribes I have met during my journeys, worship or venerate a spirit with this same name. Near the sea-shore it is pronounced Njembei, but it is evidently the same.

"This worship of the women is a kind of mystery, no men being admitted to the ceremonies, which are carried on in a house very carefully closed. This house was covered with dry palm and banana leaves, and had not even a door open to the street. To make all close, it was set against two other houses, and the entrance was through one of these. Quengueza and Mbango warned me not to go near this place, as not even they were permitted so much as to take a look. All the women of the village painted their faces and bodies, beat drums, marched about the town, and from time to time entered the idol house, where they danced all one night, and made a more outrageous noise than even the men had made before. They also presented several antelopes to the goddess, and on the fourth all but a few went off into the woods to sing to Njambai.

"I noticed that half-a-dozen remained, and in the course of the morning entered the Njambai house, where they stayed in great silence. Now my curiosity, which had been greatly excited to know what took place in this secret worship, finally overcame me. I determined to see. Walking several times up and down the street past the house to allay suspicion, I at last suddenly pushed aside some of the leaves, and stuck my head through the wall. For a moment I could distinguish nothing in the darkness. Then I beheld three perfectly naked old hags sitting on the clay floor, with an immense bundle of greengreases before them, which they seemed to be silently adoring.

"When they saw me they at once set up a hideous howl of rage, and rushed out to call their companions from the bush; in a few minutes these came hurrying in, crying:

and lamenting, rushing towards me with gestures of anger, and threatening me for my offence. I quickly reached my house, and seizing my gun in one hand and a revolver in the other, told them I would shoot the first one that came inside my door. The house was surrounded by above three hundred infuriated women, every one shouting out curses at me, but the sight of my revolver kept them back. They adjourned presently for the Njambai house, and from there sent a deputation of the men, who were to inform me that I must pay for the palaver I had made.

"This I peremptorily refused to do, telling Quengueza and Mbango that I was there a stranger, and must be allowed to do as I pleased, as their rules were nothing to me, who was a white man and did not believe in their idols. In truth, if I had once paid for such a transgression as this, there would have been an end of all travelling for me, as I often broke through their absurd rules without knowing it, and my only course was to declare myself irresponsible.

"However, the women would not give up, but threatened vengeance, not only on me, but on all the men of the town; and, as I positively refused to pay anything, it was at last, to my great surprise, determined by Mbango and his male subjects that they would make up from their own possessions such a sacrifice as the women demanded of me. Accordingly Mbango contributed ten fathoms of native cloth, and the men came one by one and put their offerings on the ground; some plates, some knives, some mugs, some beads, some mats, and various other articles. Mbango came again, and asked if I too would not contribute something, but I refused. In fact, I dared not set such a precedent. So when all had given what they could, the whole amount was taken to the ireful women, to whom Mbango said that I was his and his men's guest, and that they could not ask me to pay in such a matter, therefore they paid the demand themselves. With this the women were satisfied, and there the quarrel ended. Of course I could not make any further investigations into their mysteries. The Njambai feast lasts about two weeks. I could learn very little about the spirit which they call by this name. Their own ideas are quite vague. They know only that it protects the women against their male enemies, avenges their wrongs, and serves them in various ways if they please it."

The superstitions concerning death even extend to those cases where a man has been killed by accident.

On one occasion, a man had been shot while bathing, whereupon the whole tribe fell into a panic, thought that the village had been attacked by witches, and straightway abandoned it. On their passage to some more favoured spot, they halted for the night at another village, and at sunset they all retired to their huts, and began the mournful chant with which they celebrate the loss of their friends. The women were loud in their lamentations, as they poured out a wailing song which is marvellously like the "keen" of the Irish peasantry:—

"You will never speak to us any more!

"We cannot see your face any more!

"You will never walk with us again!

"You will never again settle our palavers for us!"

And so on, *ad libitum*. In fact, the lives of the Bakalai, which might be so joyous and free of care, are quite embittered by the superstitious fears which assail them on every side.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE ASHIRA.

APPEARANCE AND DRESS OF THE NATIVES—A MATRIMONIAL SQUABBLE—NATURAL CUNNING OF THE ASHIRA—VARIOUS MODES OF PROCURING FOOD—NATIVE PLANTATIONS—THE CHIEF'S "KOMBO," OR SALUTATION—ASHIRA ARCHITECTURE—NATIVE AGRICULTURE—SLAVERY AMONG THE ASHIRA—MEDICINE AND SURGERY—AN "HEROIC" TREATMENT—SUPERSTITIONS—HOW TO CATCH GAME—TRIAL OF THE ACCUSED—THE ORDEAL OF THE RING—THE ASHIRA FAREWELL—FUNERAL CEREMONIES—DEATH AND BURIAL OF OLEKDA.

THE tribe next in order is the Ashira. These people are not so nomad in their habits as the Bakalai, and are therefore more concentrated in one locality. They certainly are apt to forsake a village on some great occasion, but they never move to any great distance, and are not so apt to take flight as the Bakalai.

The Ashira are a singularly fine race of men. Their colour is usually black, but individuals among them, especially those of high rank, are of a comparatively light hue, being of a dark, warm bronze rather than black. The features of the Ashira are tolerably good.

The dress of the natives has its distinguishing points. The men and married women wear the grass-cloth robe, and the former are fond of covering their heads with a neat cap made of grass. So much stress do they lay on this article of apparel, that the best way of propitiating an Ashira man is to give him one of the scarlet woollen caps so affected by fishermen and yachtsmen of our own country. There is nothing which he prizes so highly as this simple article, and even the king himself will think no sacrifice too great provided that he can obtain one of these caps.

The men also carry a little grass bag, which they sling over one shoulder, and which is ornamented with a number of pendent strings or thongs. It answers the purpose of a pocket, and is therefore very useful where the clothing is of so very limited a character. Both sexes wear necklaces, bracelets, and anklets, made of thick copper bars, and they also display some amount of artistic taste in the patterns with which they dye their robes.

The strangest part of Ashira fashion is, that the females wear no clothing of any kind until they are married. They certainly tie a small girdle of grass-cloth round the waists, but it is only intended for ornament, not for dress. As is usual in similar cases, the whole of the toilet is confined to the dressing of the hair and painting of the body. The woolly hair is teased out with a skewer, well rubbed with oil and clay, and worked up until it looks something like a cocked hat, rising high on the top of the head and coming to a point before and behind. Mostly, the hair is kept in its position by a number of little sticks or leaves, which are passed through it, and serve as the framework on which it rests. Filing the teeth is practised by the Ashira, though very few of them carry the practice to such an extent as to reduce the teeth to points.

Among the West Africans, the women are not so badly treated as in the south, and indeed, are considered nearly as the equals of the men. They can hold property of their own, and are quite aware of the importance which such an arrangement gives them.

Mayolo, one of the chiefs, had a most absurd quarrel with his favourite wife, a young woman of twenty years of age, and remarkable for her light-coloured skin and hazel eyes. She had contrived either to lose or waste some of his tobacco, and he threatened to punish her by taking away the pipe, which, among these tribes, belongs equally to the husband and wife. She retorted that he could not do so, because the plantain-stem of the pipe was cut from one of her own trees, and if he quarrelled with her, she would take away the stem, and not allow him to cut another from the plantain-trees, which belonged to her and not to him. The quarrel was soon made up, but the fact that it took place at all shows the position which the women hold in domestic affairs.

As is often the case with savages, the Ashira exhibits a strange mixture of character. Ignorant though he may be, the Ashira is possessed of great natural cunning. No man can lie with so innocent a face as the "noble savage," and no one is more capable of taking care of his own interests. The Ashira porters were a continual source of trouble to Du Chaillu, and laid various deep plans for increase of wages. Those of one clan refused to work in company with those of another, and, on the principle of trades' unions, struck work unanimously if a man belonging to another clan were permitted to handle a load.

Having thus left the traveller with all his packages in the forest, their next plan was to demand higher wages before they would consent to re-enter the service. In the course of the palaver which ensued on this demand, a curious stroke of diplomacy was discovered. The old men appeared to take his part, declared that the demands of the young men were exorbitant, and aided him in beating them down, asking higher wages for themselves as a percentage on their honourable conduct. When the affair was settled, and the men paid, the young men again struck work, saying that it was not fair for the old men, who had no burdens to carry, to have higher wages than themselves, and demanding that all should be paid alike. In course of investigation it was discovered that this was a deeply-laid scheme, planned by both parties in order to exact higher wages for the whole.

These people can be at the same time dishonest and honourable, hard-hearted and kind, disobedient and faithful. When a number of Ashira porters were accompanying Du Chaillu on his journey, they robbed him shamefully, by some unfortunate coincidence stealing just those articles which could not be of the least use to them, and the loss of which would be simply irreparable. That they should steal his provisions was to be expected, but why they should rob him of his focussing-glasses and black curtains of the camera was not so clear. The cunning of the Ashira was as remarkable as their dishonesty. All the villages knew the whole circumstances. They knew who were the thieves, what was stolen, and where the property had been hidden, but the secret was so well kept that not even a child gave the least hint which would lead to the discovery of the stolen goods.

Yet when, in the course of the journey, they were reduced to semi-starvation, on account of the negro habit of only carrying two or three days' provision, the men happened to kill a couple of monkeys, and offered them both to the leader whom they had been so remorselessly plundering. Even when he refused to take them to himself, they insisted on his retaining the lion's share, and were as pleasant and agreeable as if no differences had existed.

Next day, however, those impulsive and unreflecting creatures changed their conduct again. They chose to believe, or say they believed, that the expedition would come to harm, and tried to get their pay in advance, for the purpose of running off with it. When this very transparent device was detected, they openly avowed their intention of running away, and threatened to do so even without their pay. Fortunately, the dreaded name of Quengueza had its effect on them, and, as it was represented to them that war would certainly be made on the Ashira by that chief if they dared to forsake the white traveller whom he had committed to their charge, they resumed their burdens. In the course of the day supplies arrived, and all was peace again.

The reason why the natives dislike taking much food with them is that the plantains which form the usual rations are very heavy, and the men would rather trust to the chance of coming on a village than trouble themselves with extra loads. However, there are the koola and mpegai nuts, on which the natives usually live while travelling in the nut season.

The koola is a singularly useful nut. It grows in such abundance on the tree, that when the nuts are ripe, the whole crown of the koola-tree appears to be a single mass of fruit. It is round, about as large as a cherry, and the shell is so hard that it has to be broken between two stones. Thirty of these nuts are considered sufficient for a meal, even for a native African, and, as a general rule, the trees are so plentiful that the natives do not trouble themselves about carrying food in the nut season. M. du Chaillu, however, was singularly unfortunate, for he contrived to miss the koola-trees on his journey, and hence the whole party suffered great privation.

The wild swine know the value of the koola-nuts as well as the natives, and in the season become quite fat and sleek.

The mpegai nut is round, like the koola, but the kernel is three-lobed. It is so full of oil that it is formed into cakes by the simple operation of pounding the kernel, folding the paste in leaves, and smoking them over a wood fire. When thus treated, it can be kept for a considerable time, and is generally eaten with pepper and salt, if these can be obtained. Neither the koola nor the mpegai are cultivated by the improvident natives.

About ten miles from Olenda's residence was a village belonging to a chief named Angouka, and remarkable for the manner in which the plantain was cultivated. In one plantation there were about thirty thousand trees, set about five feet apart. Each tree produced five or six shoots, but the cultivators cut away all but two or three of the finest, in accordance with true arboricultural principles. On an average, thirty pounds weight of fruit were grown on each tree, and the natives managed so as to keep up a tolerably constant supply by planting several varieties of the tree, some bearing fruit in six months after planting, some ten months, and others not until eighteen months, the last being the best and most fertile.

While describing the journeys of certain travellers, mention is frequently made of the porters and their loads. The burdens are carried in rather a peculiar manner. The men have a sort of oblong basket, called "otaitai," which is made of canes woven closely along the bottom, and loosely along the sides. The elasticity of the sides enables it to accommodate itself to various-sized loads, as they can be drawn together if the loads should be small, or expanded to admit a larger burden. Three broad straps, made of rushes, are fixed to the otaitai, one passing over each shoulder of the porter and the other one over his forehead.

Some of the ceremonies employed by the Ashira are very curious.

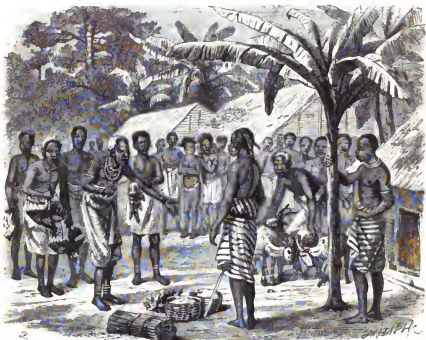
Each chief has a sort of salutation, called "Kombo," which he addresses to every one of importance whom he meets for the first time. For example, when M. du Chaillu met Olenda, the head chief of a sub-tribe of the Ashira, a singular scene took place. After waiting for some time, he heard the ringing of the "kando" or sacred bell, which is the emblem of royalty in this land, and which is only sounded on occasions of ceremony.

Presently the old chief appeared—a man of venerable aspect, and very old indeed. His woolly hair was perfectly white, his body bent almost double with age, and his face one mass of wrinkles. By way of adding to the beauty of his countenance, he had covered one side of his face with red and the other with white stripes. He was so old that he was accompanied by many of his children, all old, white-headed, and wrinkled men. The natives held him in great respect, believing that he had a powerful fetish against death.

As soon as he had recovered from the sight of a clothed man with straight hair, steady eyes, and a white face, he proceeded to make a speech which, when translated, was as follows: "I have no bowels. I am like the Ovenga river; I cannot be cut in two. But also, I am like the Niembai and Ovenga rivers, which unite together. Thus my body is united, and nothing can divide it." This address was rather puzzling because no sense

could be made from it, but the interpreter explained that this was merely the kombo, and that sense was not a necessary ingredient in it.

According to the etiquette of the country, after Olenda had made his salutation, he offered his presents, consisting of three goats, twenty fowls, twenty bunches of plantains, several baskets of ground-nuts, some sugar-cane, and two slaves. That the last-mentioned articles should be declined was a most astonishing phenomena to the Ashira.



OLENDA'S SALUTATION TO AN ISHOGO CHIEF.

The villages of the Ashira are singularly neat and cleanly, a most remarkable fact, considering the propensity to removal on the death of an inhabitant. They consist mostly of one long street, the houses being built of bark, and having the ground cleared at the back of the houses as well as in the front,—almost the only example of such industry in this part of Africa. Paths invariably lead from one village to another.

The Ashira are a tolerably industrious tribe, and cultivate the land around their villages, growing tobacco, plantains, yams, sugar-cane, and other plants with much success. The tobacco leaves, when plucked and dried, are plaited together in a sort of flat rope, and are then rolled up tightly, so that a considerable quantity of tobacco is contained in a very small space.

Of course, they drink the palm-wine, and, as the method of procuring this universally favourite beverage is rather peculiar, it will be briefly explained.

The native, taking with him an empty calabash or two, and a kind of auger, climbs the tree by means of a hoop made of pliant creepers; tying the hoop loosely round the tree, he gets into it, so that his back is pressed against the hoop and his feet against the tree. By a succession of "hitches," he ascends the tree, much as a chimney-sweep of the

old times used to ascend the wide chimneys, which are now superseded by the narrow, machine-swept flues, lifting the hoop at every hitch, and so getting up the tree with wonderful rapidity. When he has reached the top, he takes the auger out of the little bag which is hung round his neck, and bores a deep hole, just below the crown of the palm. A leaf is then plucked, rolled up in a tubular form, and one end inserted into the hole, the calabash being hung just below the other end. During the night the sap runs freely into the calabash, several quarts being procured in a single night. In the morning it is removed and a fresh calabash substituted. Even in its fresh state the juice is a very pleasant drink, but after standing for twenty-four hours it ferments, and then becomes extremely intoxicating, the process of fermentation being generally hastened by adding the remains of the previous day's brewing. The supply of juice decreases gradually, and, when the native thinks that the tree will produce no more, he plugs up the hole with clay to prevent insects from building their nests in it, and so killing the valuable tree. Three weeks is the average juice-producing time, and if a tree be forced beyond this point it is apt to die.

Besides the tobacco, the Ashira cultivate a plant called the liamba, *i.e.*, a *Cannabis*, or Indian hemp, either the same species from which the far-famed hashish of the East is made, or very closely allied to it. They always choose a rich and moist soil on the sunny side of a hill, as the plant requires both heat and moisture to attain perfection. The natives seem to prefer their liamba even to the tobacco; but there are some doubts whether both these plants have not been imported, the tobacco from America and the liamba from Asia, or more likely from north-western Africa. Du Chaillu says that the Ashira and Apingi are the only tribes who cultivate it.

Its effects upon the smokers are terrible, causing them to become for the time insane, rushing into the woods in a frantic state, quarrelling, screaming, and at last falling down in convulsions. Permanent madness is often the result of over-indulgence in this extraordinary luxury.

The above-mentioned traveller met with an idiot among the Ashira. Contrary to the usual development of idiocy among the Africans, the man was lively and jocular, jumping about with all kinds of strange antics, and singing joyous songs. The other inhabitants were very fond of him, and treated him well, and with a sort of reverence, as something above their comprehension. Idiots of the dull kind are treated harshly, and the usual mode of getting rid of them is to sell them as slaves, and so to foist them upon the purchaser before he learns the quality of his bargain.

Slavery exists among the Ashira as among other tribes, but is conducted in so humane a character that it has little connexion with the system of slavery as the word is generally understood. Olenda, for example, had great numbers of slaves, and kept them in separate settlements, each consisting of two or three hundred, each such settlement having its chief, himself a slave. One of these slave-chiefs was an Ashango, a noble-looking man, with several wives and plenty of children. He exercised quite a patriarchal sway over the people under his charge, and neither he nor the slaves seemed to consider their situation at all degrading, calling themselves the children of Olenda.

This village was remarkably neat, and the houses were better built than those of the Ashira generally. The inhabitants had cleared a large track of ground, and covered it with the plantains, sugar-canes, and ground-nuts, all of which were thriving wonderfully, and had a most picturesque appearance when contrasted with the wild beauties of the surrounding forest. Most of these slave families had been inherited by Olenda, and many of them had never known any other kind of life.

Medicine and surgery are both practised among the tribes that live along the Rembo, and in a very singular manner. The oddest thing about the practitioner is, that the natives always try to procure one from another tribe, so that an Asbango patient has a Bakalai doctor, and *vice versa*. The African prophet has little honour in his own country, hut, the farther he goes, the more he is respected. Evil spirits that have defied all the exorcisms of home-bred prophets are sure to quail before the greater powers of a sorcerer who lives at a distance; while the same man who has failed at home is tolerably sure to succeed abroad.

The natives have one grand panacea for all kinds of disorders, the same being used both for lumbago and leprosy. This consists of scarifying the afflicted part with a knife, making a great number of slight cuts, and then rubbing in a mixture of pounded capsicum and lime-juice. The agony caused by this operation is horrible, and even the blunt nerves of an African can barely endure the pain. If a native is seized with dysentery, the same remedy is applied internally, and the patient will sometimes drink half a tumbler-full for a dose. There is some ground for their faith in the capsicum, for it really is beneficial in the West African climate, and if a traveller feels feverish he can generally relieve the malady by taking plenty of red pepper with his food.

Sometimes, when the disease will not yield to the lime-juice and pepper, stronger remedies are tried. M. du Chaillu saw a curious instance of the manner in which a female practitioner exercised her art on Mâyolo, whose quarrel with his wife has already been mentioned.

The patient was seated on the ground, with a genet skin stretched before him, and the woman was kneading his body with her hands, muttering her incantations in a low voice. When she had finished this manipulation, she took a piece of the alumbi chalk, and drew a broad stripe down the middle of his chest and along each arm. Her next process was to chew a quantity of roots and seeds, and to spirt it over the body, directing her heaviest shots at the affected parts. Lastly, she took a bunch of dried grasses, twisted them into a kind of torch, lighted it, and applied the flame to various parts of the body and limbs, beginning at the feet and ending with the head. When the torch had burned itself out, she dashed the glowing end against the patient's body, and so ended her operations.

Mâyolo sat perfectly still during the proceedings, looking on with curiosity, and only wincing slightly as the flame scorched his skin. The Africans have a great faith in the efficacy of fire, and seem to think that, when it has been applied, it effectually prevents a recurrence of the disease.

The worship of the Ashira is idolatry of the worst description. One of their ongaras, or idols, named the Housekeeper, was purchased by Du Chaillu. It was, of course, hideously ugly, represented a female figure, and was kept in the house of a chief for the purpose of protecting property. The natives were horribly afraid of it, and, so long as the Housekeeper was in her place, the owner might leave his goods in perfect security, knowing that not a native would dare to touch them.

Skilful hunters as they are, they never start on the chase without preparing themselves by sundry charms. They hang all kinds of strange fetishes about their persons, and cut the backs of their hands for luck, the flowing blood having, according to their ideas, a wonderful efficacy. If they can rub a little powdered sulphur into the cuts, the power of the charm is supposed to be doubled, and any man who has thus prepared himself never misses his aim when he shoots. Painting the face red is also a great assistance in hunting; and, in consequence of these strange beliefs, a party of natives just starting for the chase presents a most absurd appearance.

Along the river Rembo are certain sacred spots, on which the natives think themselves bound to land and dance in honour of the spirit. In one place there is a ceremony analogous to that of "crossing the line" in our own vessels. When any one passes the spot for the first time, he is obliged to disembark, to chant a song in praise of the local deity, to pluck a bough from a tree and plant it in the mud. When Du Chaillu passed the spot, he was requested to follow the usual custom, but refused, on the ground of disbelief in polytheism. As usual, the natives admitted his plea as far as he was concerned. He was a great white man, and one God was enough for the rich and wise white men. But black men were poor and ignorant, and therefore wanted plenty of gods to take care of them.

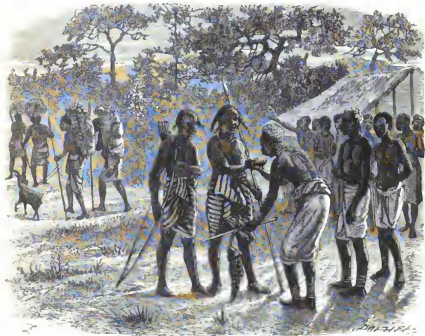
Many superstitions seem to be connected with trees. There is one magnificent tree called the "oloumi," perhaps the largest species that is to be found in Western Africa. The bark of the oloumi is said to possess many healing qualities, and, if a man washes himself all over with a decoction of the bark before starting on a trading expedition, he will be sure to make good bargains. Consequently, the oloumi-trees (which are, rather

scarce) are always damaged by the natives, who tear great strips of bark from the trunk for the purpose of making this magic decoction.

A rather remarkable ordeal is in use among the Ashira,—remarkable because it is so exactly like the ordeals of the Middle Ages.

A Bakalai canoe had been injured, and a little boy, son to Aquilai, a far-famed Bakalai sorcerer, said that the damage had been done by one of Quengueza's men. Of course the man denied the accusation, and called for the ordeal, and, as the matter concerned the Bakalai, an Ashira wizard was summoned, according to the usual custom.

He said that "the only way to make the truth appear was by the trial of the ring boiled in oil." Hereupon the Bakalai and the Goumbi (*i.e.* Camma) men gathered together, and the trial was at once made.



ASHIRA FAREWELL.

(See page 562.)

"The Ashira doctor set three little billets of bar-wood in the ground, with their ends together, then piled some smaller pieces between, until all were laid as high as the three pieces. A native pot half full of palm-oil was set upon the wood, and the oil was set on fire. When it burned up brightly, a brass ring from the doctor's hand was cast into the pot. The doctor stood by with a little vase full of grass, soaked in water, of which he threw in now and then some bits. This made the oil blaze up afresh. At last all was burnt out, and now came the trial. The accuser, the little boy, was required to take the ring out of the pot. He hesitated, but was pushed on by his father. The people cried out, 'Let us see if he lied or told truth.'

"Finally he put his hand in, seized the red-hot ring, but quickly dropped it, having severely burned his fingers. At this there was a shout, 'He lied! He lied!' and the Goumbi mau was declared innocent."

The reader will remember that when Du Chaillu visited the Ashira, he was received by the wonderful old chief Olenda, whose salutation was of so extraordinary a character. The mode in which he dismissed his guests was not less curious. Gathering his old and white-haired sons round him, Olenda addressed the travellers, wishing them success, and uttering a sort of benediction. He then took some sugar-cane, bit a piece of the pith out of it, chewed it, and spat a small portion into the hand of each of the travellers, muttering at the same time some words to the effect that he hoped that all things would go pleasantly with them, and be sweet as the breath which he had blown on their hands.

Advanced as was his age, he lived for some years longer, until he succumbed to the small-pox in common with many of his relatives and people. The circumstances attending his death and burial were very characteristic of the people.

First Olenda's head wife died of it, and then the disease spread with frightful rapidity through the district, the whole of the chiefs' wives being taken with it, and Mpoto, his nephew and heir, dying after a very short illness. Then Olenda himself took the disease. Day after day the poor old man's plaintive voice was heard chanting his song of grief at the pestilence which had destroyed his clan, and one morning he complained of fever and thirst, the sure signs of the disease. On the third day afterwards Olenda was dead, having previously exhorted the people that if he died they were not to hold the white man responsible for his death. The exhortation was needful, as they had already begun to accuse him of bringing the small-pox among them.

His body was disposed of in the usual Ashira manner. It was taken to an open place outside the village, dressed in his best clothes, and seated on the earth, surrounded with various articles of property, such as chests, plates, jugs, cooking utensils, pipes, and tobacco. A fire was also made near him, and kept burning for several weeks. As the body was carried to the place of sepulture, the people broke out in wild plaintive cries, addressing the deceased, and asking him why he left his people. Around him were the bones of many other chiefs who had preceded him to the spirit-world; and as the Ashira do not bury their dead, but merely leave them on the surface of the ground, it may be imagined that the place presented a most dismal aspect.

For several days after Olenda's death the people declared that they had seen their deceased chief walking among them, and saying that he had not left them entirely, but would guard and watch over them, and would return occasionally to see how they were going on.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE CAMMA, OR COMM.

THE FERNAND VAZ, OR REMBO RIVER—KING QUENGUEZA AND HIS DOMINIONS—APPEARANCE OF THE CAMMA—CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE AS EXEMPLIFIED BY THEIR KING—THE "PALAVER" AND ITS DISCIPLINE—HONESTY OF THE CAMMA—THE COURSE OF JUSTICE AND LAW OF REPRISAL—CODE OF ETIQUETTE—CAMMA DIGNITY—DANCING AMONG THE CAMMA—THE GORILLA DANCE—SUPERSTITION, ITS USE AND ABUSE—QUENGUEZA'S TEMPLES—HIS PERILOUS WALK—GOOD AND EVIL SPIRITS—THE OVENQUA, OR VAMPIRE—THE TERRORS OF SUPERSTITION—INITIATION INTO THE SACRED MYSTERIES—EXORCISM—THE SELF-DECEIVER—THE GODDESS OF THE SLAVES—THE ORDEAL OF THE MBOUNDOU—A TERRIBLE SCENE—SICKNESS, DEATH, AND BURIAL—DISPOSITION OF THE DEAD—BREAKING UP OF MOURNING—THE WATER CUSTOM.

If the reader will look on the west coast just below the Equator, he will see a large and important river called the Fernand Vaz. This river skirts the coast for some distance, and is very wide, but, when it turns eastward, it suddenly narrows its channel, and is known by the name of Rembo. The whole of the district through which the Rembo flows, as far as long. 10° E., is inhabited by the great Camma or Commi tribe, which is evidently another band of the same family that supplies all the tribes along the Rembo.

This tribe is broken up into a vast number of sub-tribes or clans, and each of these clans is ruled by a chief, who acknowledges himself to be a vassal of one great chief or king, named Quengueza. This man was fond of calling himself King of the Rembo, by which we must understand, not that he was king of all the tribes that inhabit its banks, but that he had authority over the river, and could prevent or encourage traffic as he chose. And, as the Rembo is the great highway into Central Africa, his position was necessarily a very important one.

Still, although he was not absolutely the king of these tribes, several of them acknowledged his superiority, and respected him, and respect, as is well said in "Eöthen," implies the right of the respected person to take the property of those who respect him. Consequently Quengueza had a right—and exercised it—to the wife of any Bakalai or Ashira, and even the chiefs of those tribes thought themselves honoured by placing their wives at the disposal of so eminent a personage. And he certainly claimed an authority over the river itself and its traffic. The Bakalai had submitted themselves to him for the sake of alliance with so powerful a chief, and found that he was by no means disposed to content himself with the mere name of sovereignty. On one occasion, when passing along the Rembo, he found that the Bakalai had quarrelled with a neighbouring tribe, and had built a fence across the river, leaving only a small gap, which could easily be defended. On coming to this obstacle, Quengueza became very angry, called for axes, and in a minute or two the fence was demolished, and the passage of the river freed. The Bakalai stood on the banks in great numbers, and, although well armed, dared not interfere.

The mode of government which prevails through all these tribes may be called the patriarchal. Each tribe is divided into a number of sub-tribes or clans, each of which resides in a separate locality, which is usually called after the name of the chief or patriarch. This man is always revered, because he is sure to be old and rich, and age and wealth are greatly venerated in this part of the world. Their authority, however, is extremely limited, and they are rather the chief advisers of their clan than autocrats. There is no real monarchy, such as is found among the Kaffir tribes, although the most important chief is sometimes greeted with the title of king. The honour, however, is an empty one, as the other chiefs have no idea of submitting themselves to one whom they consider to be but *primus inter pares*.

The Camma are a fine race of people, and, like the Ashira, are not entirely black, but vary much in hue, some having a decided olive or chocolate tint of skin. Neither are their features those of the true negro, the face of the king Quengueza resembling that of a North American Indian rather than that of an African.

The character of the Camma is well typified by that of their chief, Quengueza. He exhibited a singular mixture of nobility, meanness, kindness, cruelty, selfishness, and generosity, as is well shown by the visits of M. du Chaillu and Mr. W. Reade—the former thinking much more highly of him than the latter.

Like other savage chiefs, Quengueza could not bear his white visitors to leave him. He openly thwarted Mr. Reade, and it is evident from M. du Chaillu's account that, while he was pretending to procure porters for the journey to the Bakalai, he was in reality throwing every obstacle in the way. The possession of a white man is far too valuable to a black chief to be surrendered in a hurry, and Quengueza knew his own interests too well to allow such profitable visitors to leave his land as long as he could detain them in it.

Once Mr. Reade had succeeded in slipping off, in spite of the king's assertion that he would accompany his "dear friend" and his continual procrastination. He had paddled to some distance, when "suddenly my men stopped, and looked at each other with anxious faces. Lazily raising myself, I looked back, and could see at a great distance a large black spot, and something rising and falling like a streak of light in the sunshine. The men put their hands to their ears: I listened, and could hear now and then a faint note borne towards us on the wind.

"What's that, Mafuk?"

"King, sir."

"O, he is coming, is he?" said I, laughing. "Well, he can easily catch us now he is so near. *Kabbi!*" (*i.e.* Paddle!)

"My stewards gave an uneasy snile, and did not answer me.

"The men dipped their paddles into the water, and that was all. Every man was listening with bent head, as if trying to detect the words, or the tune. I looked round again. I could see that it was a large canoe, manned by about twenty men, with a kind of thatched house in its stern. The song still continued, and could now be heard plainly. My men flung their paddles down, and begun to talk to one another in an excited manner.

"What is the matter?" said I, pettishly.

"The sweat was running down Mafuk's forehead. He knew what he had to fear, if I did not.

"It is the war song!"

"On came the canoe, low and dark, black with men, the paddles tossing the white water in the air. On it came, shot swiftly past us, arched round, and came close alongside. Then arose a storm of angry voices, Quengueza's raised above the rest.

"What does he say, Mafuk?"

"Says we must go back."

And go back they were forced to do, for just at that moment another war-boat came gliding along, and the whole party were taken prisoners, Quengueza embracing his "dear friend," and being quite lively and jocular by reason of his success in recapturing him.

Yet this man, superstitious as he was, and dreading above all things the small-pox, that scourge of savage nations, took into his own hut a favourite little slave, who had been seized with small-pox, laid the boy on a mat close to his own bed, and insisted on nursing him throughout the illness.

Afterwards, when the small-pox had swept through the country, and almost desolated it, the sorrow of Quengueza was great and unfeigned. Wives, slaves, and relations had all been carried off by the dreaded plague; the town of Goumbi, where he lived, was deserted; and the poor old chief was obliged to collect the few survivors of his clan, and establish a new settlement on the opposite side of the river. His lamentations had all the sublimity of intense grief, and he sat chanting his monody over the dead, just as Catlin describes a North American chief when his tribe had perished by the same fearful disease.

No malady is so terrible to the savage as small-pox. Scarcely susceptible of bodily pain, enduring the most frightful wounds with quiet composure, and tenacious of life to an astonishing degree, he succumbs instantly to sickness; and an ailment which a white man resists, and finally throws off, will in nine cases out of ten be fatal to the black one. Yet for himself Quengueza had no fears, and his sole lamentations were for his friends. "The Bakalai," said he, "are all gone; the Rembo people are all gone; my beloved Monbou (his head slave) is gone; I am alone in the world."

In spite of the many barbarous customs of the Camma tribes, they have a code of minutely-regulated etiquette. If, for example, the king holds a council, he takes his seat on an elevated throne, and bears in his hand a wooden staff. When he has had his say, he passes the staff to the person who is to speak next, and he in turn to his successor. In such meetings the utmost order is preserved, and no one thinks of interrupting the speaker as long as he has possession of the staff.

It is not every one who has the right of speech in the council. This is a privilege extended to a very few men called *Conneillors*, or *Makagas*, and only to them does the king hand the staff which gives the permission to speak. They are exceedingly jealous of this honour, and yet it has been conferred upon two white men, one being M. du Chaillu, and the other a Captain Lawlin of New York. The latter individual caused quite a revolution in his district, abolishing the many impediments to trade, inflicting severe penalties on quarrelsome chiefs who made warlike aggressions on their neighbours, and establishing a strict code of criminal laws.

Some such arrangement as the possession of the orator's staff is absolutely necessary for the due regulation of the innumerable "palavers," or native parliaments, that are continually being held on all sorts of subjects. If one trader overreaches another, and can be detected in time, a palaver is held; and a similar ceremony is gone through if a trader pays for goods in advance and does not receive them. Runaway wives are the most fertile source of palavers, and, if the accused be proved guilty, the penalty is very severe. Generally the offending wife has her nose and ears cut off, and a similar punishment is inflicted on the man with whom she is found; but the latter has the privilege of commuting this sentence for a fine—generally a slave. Murder is a frequent cause of palavers, and it is a rather remarkable fact that the natives draw no distinction between accidental homicide and wilful murder. Death is not necessarily the punishment of homicide, but, as a rule, a heavy fine is substituted for the capital penalty.

If the culprit cannot be captured, the injured husband has a singular mode of procuring a palaver. He goes out and kills the first man he meets, proclaiming that he has done so because some one has run away with his wife. The course of justice then passes out of his hands. The relatives of the murdered man are now bound to take up the quarrel, which they do by killing, not the murderer, but some one of another village. His friends retaliate upon a third village, and so the feud passes from one village to another until the whole district is in arms. The gates are barricaded, no one dares to go out alone, or unarmed, and at last one unfortunate clan has a man murdered and can find no chance of retaliation. The chief of the clan then holds a palaver, and puts forward his claim against the man who ran away with the wife. The chief of the delinquent's clan then pays a fine, the affair is settled, and peace is restored.

Too often, however, when a wife is, or appears to be, unfaithful, her husband is in collusion with her, for the purpose of extorting money out of some imprudent young man. She gets up a flirtation with the susceptible victim, and appoints a meeting at a spot where the husband has placed himself in concealment. As soon as the couple reach the appointed place, out comes the husband, and threatens a palaver if a fine be not paid at once. The young man knows well enough what the result of the palaver will be to him, and accordingly makes the best of the business and pays his fine. So completely established is this system, that even the most powerful chiefs have been known to purchase pretty wives for the express purpose of using them as traps wherewith to ensnare the young men.

As time is not of the least consequence to the Camma, and they are rather pleased than otherwise when they can find some sort of amusement, a palaver will sometimes expend a week upon a trivial cause. All these palavers are held in the simple buildings erected for the purpose. These edifices are little more than sheds, composed of a roof supported on poles, and open on all sides. The king sits in the middle on an elevated throne made of grass, and covered with leopard-skins as emblems of his rank, while all the others are obliged either to stand or to sit on the ground.

When palavers are of no avail, and nothing but war can be the result of the quarrel, both parties try to frighten the enemy by the hideousness of their appearance. They are perfectly aware that they could not withstand a charge, and, knowing that the enemy is not more gifted with courage than themselves, try to inspire terror by their menacing aspect. They paint their faces white, this being the war colour, and sometimes add bars and stripes of red paint. The white paint, or chalk, is prepared in their greegree or idol houses, and is thought to be a very powerful charm. They also hang fetishes of various kinds upon their bodies, and then set off in their canoes, yelling, shouting, flourishing their weapons, and trying to intimidate their adversaries, but taking very good care not to come within two hundred yards of the enemy's boats.

The Camma seem to be a better principled people than the Ashira. When Dn Chailu was troubled with the strikes among his Ashira porters, his Camma men stood by him, and would not consent to his plan of sending them forward with part of the goods. They feared lest he should be poisoned among the Ashira, and insisted on leaving some of their party with their chief.

The reader may remember that the old chief Olenda was held in great respect by his people. Among the tribes of Equatorial Africa much reverence is paid to age, an old person being looked upon as nearly akin to the spirits into whose land he is soon to enter. Contrary to the usual custom of the South, the young never enter the presence of an old man or woman without hending low, and making a genuine school-girl courtesy. When they seat themselves, it is always at a respectful distance; and if they are asked for a pipe, or for water, they present it on one knee, addressing a man as "Father" and a woman as "Mother." It is, moreover, contrary to etiquette for a young man to tell bad news to an old one. Even the dead bodies of the old are honoured, and the bones and skulls are laid up in little temples made expressly for them. They are usually laid in chalk, which is therefore thought to possess sundry virtues, and with that chalk the relations of the dead man mark their bodies whenever they are about to engage in any important undertaking. The skull is also put to practical uses. If a trader comes to make purchases, the vendor always entertains him hospitably, but has a definite purpose in so doing. Before he prepares the banquet, he goes to the fetish house, and scrapes a little powder from the skull. This he mixes with the food, and thus administers it to his guest. The spirit of the dead man is then supposed to enter into the body of the person who has eaten a portion of his skull, and to impress him to make good bargains with his host—in other words, to be cheated.

When a stranger first enters a Camma village, he is rather surprised at the number of boxes which he sees. The fact is, that among the Camma boxes are conventionally held to represent property, the neighbours giving them the credit of being filled with valuables. Consequently it is the ambition of every Camma man to collect as many chests as he can, leaving the chance of filling them to a future opportunity. When his

white visitors gave Quengueza their presents, the old chief was quite as much struck with the number of boxes as with their contents, and expressed his gratitude accordingly.

The dances of the Camma have much in common with those of other tribes, but they have one or two peculiarities of their own. A fat old head-chief, or king, as their rulers are generally called—though, by the way, the term "patriarch" would be much more appropriate—gave a grand dinner in honour of his white visitor. Noise is one of the chief elements in a negro's enjoyment, as it is in the case of a child. The negro, in fact, is the veriest child in many things, and always remains a child. On this occasion the "band" distinguished themselves by making a noise disproportionately loud for their numbers.



CAMMA DANCE.

There was a row of drummers, each beating his noisy instrument with such energy that a constant succession of drummers took the instruments, the stoutest and strongest being worn out in less than an hour. There were also a number of boys beating with sticks upon hollow pieces of wood, and, as if the drummers and log-beaters did not make sufficient noise, the musicians had hung a row of brass kettles on poles, and were banging them with sticks as if they had been drums. Add to this the shouts and screams of the excited dancers, and the noise may be tolerably well appreciated.

Great quantities of palm-wine were drunk, and the consequence was, that before very long the whole of the dancers and musicians, including the king himself, were in various stages of intoxication. As to the king, being rather more inebriated than his subjects, he must needs show his own skill in the dance, and therefore jumped and leaped about the ground with great agility for so heavy a man, while his wives bowed down to his feet as he danced, clapped their hands in time to the music, and treated him with the deepest veneration.

As to the dance itself, the less said about it the better. It is as immodest as the unrestrained savage temperament can make it, inflamed by strong drink and by the sound of the drum, which seems to excite the people almost to madness. The songs with which they accompany the dance are of a similar nature, and are worse than the worst specimens of heathen vice as narrated by the classic satirists.

There is, however, one dance in which the immodest element does not exist. It is called the Gorilla Dance, and is performed as a means of propitiating the deities before starting on a gorilla-hunt: for this is part of the great gorilla country, in which alone is found that huge and powerful ape which has lately attracted so much attention.

An account of a gorilla-hunt will be given when we come to the Fan tribe, hut at present we will content ourselves with the gorilla-dance, as seen by Mr. W. Reade. He had made several unavailing attempts to kill a gorilla, and had begun to despair of success, although the place was a well-known haunt of these animals.

"One morning Etia, the chief hunter of the village, came and told me that he had heard the cry of a njina (i.e. gorilla) close to one of the neighbouring plantations. He said that we should certainly be able to kill him next day, and that during the night he and his friends would celebrate the gorilla-dance.

"This Etia was a Mchaga slave. His skin, to use Oshupia's comparison, was like that of an old alligator—all horny and wrinkled; his left hand had been crippled by the teeth of a gorilla; his face was absurdly hideous, and yet reminded me of something which I had seen before. After puzzling myself for a long time, I at last remembered that it was the mask which Mr. Ryder wore in the character of Caliban at the Princess's which Etia resembled so closely. That night I could have imagined him less man than monster.

"In the house allotted to the slaves three old men, their faces grotesquely chalked, played the drums, the sounding log, and the one-stringed harp. To them danced Etia, imitating the uncouth movements of the gorilla. Then the iron bell was rung, and Omburi, the evil spirit, was summoned to attend, and a hoarse rattle mingled with the other sounds. The dancers rushed yelling into the midst, and sprang into the air. Then would be a pause, broken only by the faint slow tinkling of the harp, then the drum would be beaten, and the sticks thundered on the log.

"In another dance Caliban assumed the various attitudes peculiar to the ape. Now he would be *seated* on the ground, his legs apart, his elbows resting on his knees, his head drooping, and in his face the vacant expression of the brute; sometimes he folded his hands on his forehead. Suddenly he would raise his head with prone ears and flaming eyes, while a loud shout of applause would prove how natural it was. In the chorus all the dancers assumed such postures as these, while Etia, climbing ape-like up the pole which supported the roof, towered above them all.

"In the third dance he imitated the gorilla attacked and being killed. The man, who played the hunter inimitably, acted terror and irresolution before he pulled the trigger of his imaginary gun. Caliban, as gorilla, charged *upon all fours*, and fell dead at the man's feet, in the act of attempting to seize him with one hand.

"You may be sure that nothing short of seeing a gorilla in its wild state could have afforded me so much interest or given me so good a clue to the animal's real habits. For here could be no imposture. It was not an entertainment arranged for my benefit, but a religious festival held on the eve of an enterprise."

This dance brings us to the religion, or rather the superstition, of the Camma people. Superstition has its estimable, its grotesque, and its dark side, and there is scarcely any people among whom these three phases are more strongly marked.

The estimable side is, of course, the value of superstition as a substitute for true religion—a feeling of which the savage never has the least idea, and which it is almost impossible to make him comprehend. He often takes very kindly to his teacher, picks up with wonderful readiness the phrases which he hears, regulates his external life in accordance with the admonitions he has received; but it is very, very seldom indeed that any real conviction has touched his heart; and, as soon as the direct influence of his teacher is removed, he reverts to his old mode of life. Mr. Reade relates a rather striking

example of this tendency. He met a negress on her way to church, accompanied by a beautiful little girl.

Addressing the child, he asked whether she was the woman's daughter. The mother answered in the affirmative; and, in the same breath, offered to sell her. This was the original negro nature. Just then the bell stopped, and her education made itself apparent. "Hei-gh!" she cried, "you no hear bell stop? Me go now. *After church* we palaver, give me plenty dash (*i.e.* presents), den we drink rum, den you take him (*i.e.* the girl); palaver said."

Superstition, therefore, takes the place of personal religion, and, in spite of the dread excesses into which it leads the savages, it does at all events keep before them the idea of a spiritual world, and impresses upon them the fact that there exist beings higher and greater than themselves.

That their superstitions, debased and gross as they are, have yet the power of impressing the native mind with a feeling of veneration, is evident by the extreme unwillingness of these people to utter the name by which they designate the Great Spirit. Of course their idea of a God is very imperfect, but still it is sufficient to impress them with such awe that they can scarcely be induced to pronounce the sacred name. Only twice did Mr. Reade hear it. Once, when they were in a dangerous storm, the men threw up their arms, and ejaculated the holy name as if it were some great charm; and on another occasion, when a man was asked suddenly what was the native name for God, he pointed upwards, and in a low voice uttered the word "Njambi."

The ceremonies observed at the time of full moon have been several times mentioned in the course of the present work. Du Chaillu gives an account of one of these ceremonies as performed by the Camma, which is useful in showing the precise object of the ceremony.

One day Quengueza sent word that he was ill, and that the people must consult Ilogo, the spirit of the moon, and ask him whether he was bewitched, and how he was to be cured. Accordingly, just before the full moon, a crowd of women assembled in front of Quengueza's house, accompanied by the drums and the usual noisy appurtenances of a negro festival. They formed themselves into a hollow circle, and sang songs in honour of Ilogo, clapping their hands in unison with the beating of the drums.

In the midst of the circle sat a woman steadfastly gazing at the moon, and waiting for inspiration. Two women tried this post unsuccessfully, but the third soon began to tremble, her limbs to work convulsively, then to stiffen, and at last she fell insensible to the ground. Then arose the chant to Ilogo with redoubled energy, the singers repeating the same words over and over again for about half an hour, until the prostrate form of the woman began to show signs of returning sensibility. On being questioned, she said that she had seen Ilogo, and that he had told her that the king was not bewitched, but that he could be healed by a remedy prepared from a certain plant. She looked utterly prostrated by the inspiration, and not only her hearers, but also herself, thoroughly believed in the truth of her strange statement.

It will be seen that Quengueza was nearly as superstitious as his subjects. He never stirred without his favourite fetish, which was an ugly little wooden image, embellished with a row of four sacred cowries stuck on its abdomen. These cowries are not indigenous to Western Africa, and seem to have been brought from the eastern coast of the continent. Whenever he ate or drank, the fetish always bore him company, and before eating he saluted it by passing the four sacred cowries over his lips. Before drinking he always poured a few drops over the feet of the image by way of a libation.

When travelling, he liked to have with him one of his medicine-men, who could charm away rain by blowing with his magic horn. So sure was the doctor of his powers, that on one occasion he would not allow the party to repair a dilapidated hut in which they passed the night. As it happened, a violent shower of rain fell in the middle of the night, and drenched the whole party. The doctor, however, was not at all disconcerted, but said that if he had not blown the horn the rain would have been much heavier.

Still his natural strength of mind sometimes asserted itself, and on one remarkable occasion, when the small-pox had destroyed so many people, and the survivors were

crying out for vengeance against the sorcerers who had brought the disease upon them, Quengueza forbade any more slaughter. The small-pox, he said, was a wind sent from Njambi (pronounced N'yanyé), who had killed enough people already.

Like most native chiefs, Quengueza had a pet superstition of his own. At his own town of Gombi (or Ngumbi, as it is sometimes spelt), there was a very convenient and dry path leading from the houses to the river. Quengueza, however, never would use this path, but always embarked or landed at an abominable mud-bank, over which it was necessary to run as fast as possible, in order to avoid sinking in the river. The reason was, that when he came to the throne he had been told that an enemy had placed an evil spirit in the path, and that he would die if he went along it.

So powerful was this spirit, that several unavailing attempts had been made to drive it away, and at last Quengueza was obliged to send for a renowned Bakalai wizard named Aquilai. This was the same man who was mentioned in page 561 as the father of the boy who was tried by the ordeal of the hot ring.

"The people gathered in great numbers under the immense *hangar* or covered space in which I had been received, and there lit fires, round which they sat. . . . About ten o'clock, when it was pitch dark, the doctor commenced operations by singing some boasting songs recounting his power over witches. This was the signal for all the people to gather into their houses, and about their fires under the hangar.

"Next, all the fires were carefully extinguished, all the lights put out, and in about an hour more not a light of any kind was in the whole town except mine. I gave notice that white men were exempted from the rule made in such cases, and this was allowed. The most pitchy darkness and the most complete silence reigned everywhere. No voice could be heard, even in a whisper, among the several thousand people gathered in the gloom.

"At last the curious silence was broken by the doctor; who, standing in the centre of the town, began some loud babbling of which I could not make out the meaning. From time to time the people answered him in chorus. This went on for an hour; and was really one of the strangest scenes I ever took part in. . . . The hollow voice of the witch-doctor resounded curiously through the silence, and when the answer of many mingled voices came through the darkness, it really assumed the air of a serious, old-fashioned incantation scene.

"At last, just at midnight, I heard the doctor approach. He had bells girded about him, which he jingled as he walked. He went separately to every family in the town, and asked if the witch which obstructed the king's highway belonged to them. Of course all answered 'No.' Then he began to run up and down the bewitched street, calling out loudly for the witch to go off. Presently he came back, and announced that he could no longer see the *aniemba*, and that doubtless she had gone never to come back. At this all the people rushed out and shouted, 'Go away! go away! and never come back to hurt our king.'

"Then fires were lit, and we all sat down to eat. This done, all the fires were again extinguished, and all the people sang wild songs until four o'clock. Then the fires were again lit.

"At sunrise the whole population gathered to accompany their king down the dreaded street to the water.

"Quengueza, I knew, was brave as a hunter and as a warrior. He was also intelligent in many things where his people were very stupid. But the poor old king was now horribly afraid. He was assured that the witch was gone, but he evidently thought himself walking to almost certain death. He would have refused to go if it had been possible. He hesitated, but at last determined to face his fate, and walked manfully down to the river and back amid the plaudits of his loyal subjects."

Throughout the whole of this land are many of these prohibitory superstitions. When, for example, a woman is about to become a mother, both she and her husband are prohibited from seeing a gorilla, as all the natives firmly believe that, in such a case, the expected child would be a gorilla cub and not a human baby. Drinking the water of the Bembo is also prohibited, because the bodies of those who are executed for witchcraft are

chopped up and flung into it, and the natives imagine that, if they were to drink of the water, they would become sorcerers against their will. Yet, as if to show the inconsistency of superstition, there is a rite, which will be presently mentioned, in which tasting the water is the principal ceremony.

Then there is a certain island in the Rembo of which the natives have the greatest dread. It is thickly covered with trees, and the people fully believe that in the midst of this island there lives a huge crocodile covered with brass scales. This crocodile is an



QUENQUEZA'S WALK.

enchanter, and by his incantations every one who lands on the island either dies suddenly, or goes mad and wanders about until he dies. Du Chaillu of course did land, and traversed the island in different directions. The people were stupefied with astonishment; but even the fact of his safe return made no difference in their belief, because he was white, and the great enchanter had no power over white men.

As to the fetishes, they are innumerable. Weather fetishes are specially plentiful, but, unlike the charms of Southern Africa, they are used to keep off the rain, not to produce it.

One fetish gave our traveller a vast amount of trouble. He had purchased, from a petty chief named Rabolo, a small deserted village, and had built a new house. The edifice was completed all but the verandah, when the builders refused to work any longer, as they had come upon a great health-fetish that Rabolo had placed there when the village was first built. They flatly refused to touch it until Rabolo came, and, even after his permission had been gained, they were very nervous about the seeming desecration.

The fetish was a good example of such articles. Buried in the sand were two skulls, one of a man and another of a chimpanzee, this combination having a high reputation

among the Camma. These were buried at the foot of the two posts that constituted the entrance to the village. Then came a quantity of crockery and broken glass, and then some more chimpanzee skulls, while a couple of wooden idols kept company with the component parts of the charm. A sacred creeper was also planted by the posts, which it had covered with its branches, and the natives believe that as long as the creeper survives, so long does the fetish retain its power.

Rabolo was very proud of his health-fetish, as no one had died in the village since it had been set up. But, as there had never been more than fifteen inhabitants, the low death-rate is easily accounted for.

From their own accounts, the Camma must have a very unpleasant country. It is overrun with spirits, but the evil far outnumber the good, and, according to the usual custom of ignorant nations, the Camma pay their chief reverence to the former, because they can do the most harm.

As specimens of these spirits, three will be mentioned. The first is a good spirit called Mburi, who traverses the country, and occasionally pays a visit to the villages. He has taken under his protection the town of Aniambia, which also has the privilege of being guarded by an evil spirit of equal power, so that the inhabitants enjoy a peace of mind not often to be found in the Camma country. There is only one drawback to the repose of the place, and that is the spirit of an insane woman, who made her habitation outside the village when she was alive, and continues to cultivate her plantation, though she is a spirit. She retains her dislike to human beings, and, if she can catch a man alone, she seizes him, and beats him to death.

The evil spirit which protects Aniambia is a very wicked and mischievous being named Abambou, who lives chiefly in burial-places, and makes his bed of skeletons. In order to propitiate Abambou, offerings are made to him daily, consisting entirely of food. Sometimes the Camma cook the food, and lay it in lonely places in the wood, where Abambou would be sure to find it; and sometimes they propitiate him by offerings of plantains, sugar-cane, and nuts. A prayer accompanies the offering, and is generally couched in the universal form of asking the protecting spirit to help the Camma and destroy inimical tribes. It is rather curious that, when a free man makes an offering to Abambou, he wraps it in leaves; but the slaves are obliged to lay it on the bare ground.

Fetish-houses are appropriated to Mburi and Abambou, and are placed close to each other. They are little huts, about six feet high and six wide. No image is placed in the huts, but only a fire, which is always kept burning, and a chest, on the top of which are laid some sacred chalk and red parrot's feathers.

A bed is usually prepared in Abambou's house, on which he may repose when he is tired of walking up and down the country; and, as the medicine-man takes care that no one but himself shall open the door of the hut, the villagers pass by in awe-struck silence, none knowing whether at that moment the dreadful Abambou may not be sleeping within. Now and then he is addressed publicly, the gist of the speeches being that everybody is quite well and perfectly happy, and hopes that he will not hurt them.

The evil spirit, however, who is most feared by this tribe is the Ovengua or Vampire. It is most surprising to find the Hungarian and Servian superstition about the vampire existing among the savages of Western Africa, and yet it flourishes in all its details along the banks of the Rembo.

No worship is paid to the Ovengua, who is not thought to have any power over diseases, nor to exercise any influence upon the tenor of a man's life. He is simply a destructive demon, capricious and cruel, murdering without reason, and wandering ceaselessly through the forests in search of victims.

By day he hides in dark caverns, so that travellers need not fear him, but at night he comes out, takes a human form, and beats to death all whom he meets. Sometimes when an Ovengua comes across a body of armed men, they resist him, and kill the body in which he has taken up his residence.

When an Ovengua has been thus killed, the conquerors make a fire and burn the body, taking particular care that not a bone shall be left, as from the bones new Ovenguas are made. The natives have a curious idea that, if a person dies from witchcraft, the body

decays until the bones are free from flesh. As soon as this is the case, they leave the grave one by one, form themselves end to end into a single line, and then gradually resolve themselves into a new Ovengua. Several places are especially dreaded as being favourite resorts of this horrible demon, and neither bribes, threats, nor persuasions, can induce a Camma to venture near them after nightfall.

It is very probable that cunning and revengeful men may take advantage of the belief in the vampire, and when they have conceived an antipathy against any one, may waylay and murder him treacherously, and then contrive to throw the blame on the Ovengua.

The prevalence of this superstition may perhaps account for much of the cruelty exercised upon those who are suspected of witchcraft, the fear of sorcery being so overwhelming as to overcome all feelings of humanity, and even to harden the heart of the parent against the child. The slightest appearance of disbelief in such an accusation would at once induce the terrified multitude to include both parties in the accusation, and the consequence is that, when any one is suspected of witchcraft, none are so loud and virulent in their execrations as those who ought to be the natural protectors of the accused.

Mr. C. Reade, in his "Savage Africa," gives an example of the cruelty which is inspired by terror.

A petty chief had been ill for some time, and a woman had been convicted, by her own confession, of having bewitched him. It is true that the confession had been extorted by flogging, but this fact made no difference in the minds of the natives, who had also forced her to accuse her son, a boy only seven years old, of having been an accomplice in the crime. This was done lest he should grow up to manhood, and then avenge his mother's death upon her murderers.

"On the ground in their midst crouched the child, the mark of a severe wound visible on his arm, and his wrists bound together by a piece of withy. I shall never forget that child's face. It wore that expression of dogged endurance which is one of the traditional characteristics of the savage. While I was there, one of the men held an axe before his eyes—it was the brute's idea of humour. The child looked at it without showing a spark of emotion. Some, equally fearless of death, would have displayed contempt, anger, or acted curiously; but he was the perfect stoic. His eye flashed for a moment when his name was first mentioned, but only for a moment. He showed the same indifference when he heard his life being pleaded for, as when, a little while before, he had been taunted with his death."

Both were killed. The mother was sent to sea in a canoe, killed with an axe, and then thrown overboard. The unfortunate boy was burnt alive, and bags of gunpowder were tied to his legs, which, according to the account of a spectator, "made him jump like a dog." On being asked why so cruel a death had been inflicted on the poor boy, while the mother was subjected to the comparatively painless death by the axe, the man was quite astounded that any one should draw so subtle a distinction. Death was death in his opinion, however inflicted, and, as the writhing of the tortured child amused the spectators, he could not see why they should deprive themselves of the gratification.

"This explains well enough the cruelty of the negro: it is the cruelty of the boy who spins a cockchafer on a pin; it is the cruelty of ignorance. A twirling cockchafer and a boy who jumps like a dog are ludicrous sights to those who do not possess the sense of sympathy. How useless is it to address such people as these with the logic of reason, religion, and humanity! Such superstitions can only be quelled by laws as ruthless as themselves."

Another curious example of this lack of feeling is given by the same author. Sometimes a son, who really loves his mother after his own fashion, thinks that she is getting very old, and becoming more infirm and unable to help him. So he kills her, under the idea that she will be more useful to him as a spirit than in bodily form, and, before dismissing her into the next world, charges her with messages to his friends and relatives who have died. The Camma do not think that when they die they are cut off, even from tangible communication with their friends. "The people who are dead," said one of the men, "when they are tired of staying in the bush (*i.e.* the burying-ground), then they come for

one of their people which they like. And one ghost will say, 'I am tired of staying in the hush; please to build a little house for me in the town close to your house.' He tells the man to dance and sing too; so the men call plenty of women by night to dance and sing."

In accordance with this request, the people build a miniature hut for the unquiet spirit, then go to the grave and make an idol. They then take the bamboo frame on which the body was carried into the hush, and which is always left on the spot, place on it some dust from the grave, and carry it into the hut, the door of which is closed by a white cloth.

Among the Camma, as with many savage tribes, there is a ceremony of initiation into certain mysteries, through which all have to pass before they can be acknowledged as men and women. These ceremonies are kept profoundly secret from the uninitiated, but Mr. Reade contrived to gain from one of his men some information on the subject.

On the introduction of a novice, he is taken in a fetish house, stripped, severely flogged, and then plastered with goat's dung, the ceremony being accompanied by music. Then he is taken to a screen, from behind which issues a strange and uncouth sound, supposed to be produced by a spirit named Uknk. There seems, however, to be a tacit understanding that the spirit is only supposed to be present in a vicarious sense, as the black informant not only said that the noise was made by the fetish man, but showed the instrument with which he produced it. It was a kind of whistle, made of hollowed mangrove wood, and closed at one end by a piece of bat's wing.

During five days after initiation an apron is worn, made of dry palm-leaves. These ceremonies are not restricted to certain times of the year, but seem to be held whenever a few candidates are ready for initiation. Mr. Reade had several times seen lads wearing the mystic apron, but had not known its signification until Mongilomba betrayed the secrets of the lodge.

The same man also gave some information regarding the initiation of the females. He was, however, very reticent on the subject, partly, perhaps, because the women kept their secret close, and partly because he was afraid lest they might hear that he had acted the spy upon them, and avenge their insulted rites by mobbing and beating him.

Some of the ceremonies are not concealed very carefully, being performed in the open air. The music is taken in hand by elderly women, called Ngembi, who commence operations by going into the forest and clearing a space. They then return to the village, and build a sacred hut, into which no male is allowed to enter.

The novice, or Igonji, is now led to the cleared space—which, by the way, must be a spot which she has never before visited—and there takes her place by a fire which is carefully watched by the presiding Ngembi, and never suffered to go out. For two days and nights a Ngembi sits beside the fire, feeding it with sticks, and continually chanting, "The fire will never die out." On the third day the novice is rubbed with black, white, and red chalk, and is taken into the sacred hut, where certain unknown ceremonies are performed, the men surrounding it and beating drums, while the novice within continually responds to them by the cry, "Okanda! yo! yo! yo!" which, as Mr. Reade observes, reminds one of the "Evoe!" of the ancient Bacchantes.

The spirit Ukuk only comes to light on such occasions. At other times he lives deep below the surface of the earth in his dark cavern, which is initiated as well as may be by the sacred hut, which is thickly covered with leaves, so that not a ray of light may enter. When he enters the hut, he blows the magic whistle, and on hearing the sound all the initiated repair to the house.

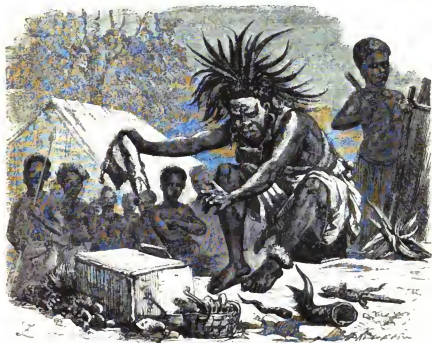
As these spirits are so much feared, it is natural that the natives should try to drive them out of every place where they have taken up an unwelcome residence.

With some spirits the favourite spot is the body of a man, who is thereby made ill, and who will die if the spirit be not driven out of him. Now the Camma believe that evil spirits cannot bear noise, especially the beating of drums, and so, at the call of the fetish man, they assemble round the sick man, beat drums and kettles close to his head, sing, dance, and shout with all their might. This hubbub goes on until either the patient dies, as might naturally be expected, or manages to recover in spite of the noise. The

people who assist in the operation do so with the greatest vigour, for, by some strange coincidence, it happens that the very things which disgust an evil spirit, such as dancing, singing, drum-beating, and noise-making in general, are just the things which please them best, and so their duties and inclinations are happily found to coincide.

Sometimes the demon takes up his residence in a village, and then there is a vast to-do before he can be induced to go out.

A fetish man is brought from a distance—the farther the better—and immediately set to work. His first business is to paint and adorn himself, which he does in such a manner



EJECTING A DEMON.

as to look as demoniacal as possible. One of these men, named Damagondai, seen by Du Chaillu, had made himself a horrible object. His face was whitened with chalk, a red circle was drawn on each side of his mouth, a band of the same colour surrounded each eye, and another ran from the forehead to the tip of the nose. A white band was drawn from the shoulders to the wrists, and one hand was completely whitened.

On his head was a tall plume of black feathers; strips of leopard skin and a variety of charms were hung upon his body; and to his neck was suspended a little box, in which he kept a number of familiar spirits. A string of little bells encircled his waist.

This ghastly figure had seated himself on a stool before another box full of charms, and on the box stood a magic mirror. Had the magician been brought from the inland parts of the country, and away from the river along which all traffic runs, he could not have possessed such an article as a mirror, and would have used instead a bowl of water. By the mirror lay the sacred horn full of the fetish powder, accompanied by a rattle containing snake-bones. His assistant stood near him, belabouring a board with two sticks.

After the incantations had been continued for some time, the wizard ordered that the names of all the inhabitants of the village should be called out, and as each name was shouted he looked in the mirror. However, he decided at last that the evil spirit did not live in any of the inhabitants, but had taken up his residence in the village, which he wanted for himself, and that he would be very angry if any one tried to share it with him.

Du Chaillu saw that this was a sly attack on him, as he had just built some comfortable houses in the village. Next morning the people began to evacuate the place. They carried off their property, and tore down the houses, and by nightfall not an inhabitant was left in the village except the white man and two of his attendants, both of whom were in great terror, and wanted to follow the others. Even the chief was obliged to go, and, with many apologies to his guest, built a new house outside the deserted village.

Not wishing to give up the houses that had cost so much time and trouble, Du Chaillu tried to induce the natives to rebuild the huts; but not even tobacco could overcome their fear of the evil spirit. However, at last some of the bolder men tried the experiment, and by degrees a new village arose in the place of that which had been destroyed.

The same magician who conducted the above-mentioned ceremony was an unmitigated cheat, and seems to have succeeded in cheating himself as well as his countrymen. He was absurdly afraid of darkness, and as nightfall came on he always began to be frightened, wailing and execrating all sorcerers, witches, and evil spirits, lamenting because he knew that some one was trying to bewitch him, and at last working himself up to such a pitch of excitement that the inhabitants of the village had to turn out of their huts, and begin dancing and singing.

Perhaps this self-deception was involuntary, but Damagondai wilfully cheated the people for his own purposes. In his double capacity of chief and fetish man he had the charge of the village idols. He had a very potent idol of his own, with copper eyes and a sword-shaped protruding tongue. With the eyes she saw coming events, and with the tongue she foretold the future and cut to pieces the enemies of Damagondai's people. M. du Chaillu wanted to purchase this idol, but her owner refused to sell her. He hinted, however, that for a good price the goddess of the slaves might be bought. Accordingly, a bargain was struck, the idol in question was removed from the hut, packed up, and carried away by the purchaser, while the slaves were away at their work. Damagondai was rather perplexed as to the answer which he would have to give the slaves when they came home and found their idol-house empty, but at last decided to tell them that he had seen the goddess leave her house, and walk away into the woods.

The idol in question was an absurd-looking object, something like a compromise between one of the figures out of a "Noah's Ark" and a Dutch wooden doll.

Various as are all these superstitions, there is one point at which they all converge, namely the dread Mboundou ordeal, by which all who are accused of witchcraft are tested. The mboundou is a tree belonging to the same group as that from which strychnine is made, and is allied to the scarcely less celebrated "vine" from which the Macoushie Indians prepare the wourali poison. From the root of the mboundou a drink is prepared, which has an intoxicating as well as a poisonous quality, and which is used for two purposes, the one being as an ordeal, and the other as a means of divination.

The medicine-men derive most of their importance from their capability of drinking the mboundou without injury to their health; and while in the intoxicated state they utter sentences more or less incoherent, which are taken as revelations from the particular spirit who is consulted. The mode of preparing the poisoned draught is as follows:—

A given quantity of the root is scraped and put into a bowl, together with a pint of water. In a minute or so a slight fermentation takes place, and the water is filled with little bubbles, like those of champagne or other sparkling wines. When this has subsided, the water becomes of a pale reddish tint, and the preparation is complete. Its taste is very bitter.

The effects of the mboundou vary greatly in different individuals. There was a hardened old sorcerer, named Olanga, who was greatly respected among his people for

his capability of drinking mboundou in large quantities, and without any permanent effect. It is very probable that he may have had some antidote, and prepared himself beforehand, or that his constitution was exceptionally strong, and that he could take with impunity a dose which would kill a weaker man.

Olanga was constantly drinking mboundou, using it chiefly as a means of divination. If, for example, a man fell ill, his friends went off to Olanga, and asked him to drink



OLANGA DRINKING MBOUNDOU.

mboundou and find out whether the man had been bewitched. As soon as he had drunk the poison, the men sat round him, beating the ground with their sticks, and crying out the formula—

"If he is a witch, let the mboundou kill him.

"If he is not, let the mboundou go out."

In about five minutes symptoms of intoxication showed themselves. The old man began to stagger, his speech grew thick, his eyes became bloodshot, his limbs shook convulsively, and he began to talk incoherently. Now was the time to ask him questions, and accordingly several queries were propounded, some of which he answered; but he soon became too much intoxicated to understand, much less to answer, the questions that were put to him. Sleep then came on, and in less than half an hour Olanga began to recover.

With most persons, however, it has a different and a deadly effect, and M. du Chaillu mentions that he has seen persons fall dead within five minutes of drinking the mboundou, the blood gushing from the mouth, eyes, and nose.

It is very seldom that any one but a professional medicine-man escapes with life after drinking mboundou. Mostly there is an absence of the peculiar symptoms which show that the poison is working itself out of the system, and in such a case the spectators hasten the work of death by their knives. Sometimes the drinkers rally from the effects of the poison, but with constitutions permanently injured; and in a few cases they escape altogether. Du Chaillu was a witness to such an event. Three young men, who were accused of witchcraft, were adjudged, as usual, to drink the mboundou. They drank it, and boldly stood their ground, surrounded by a yelling multitude, armed with axes, spears, and knives, ready to fall upon the unfortunate victims if they showed symptoms that the draught would be fatal. However, they succeeded in keeping their feet until the effects of the poison had passed off, and were accordingly pronounced innocent.

According to custom, the medicine-man who prepared the draught finished the ceremony by taking a bowl himself, and while in the stage of intoxication he gladdened the hearts of the people by saying that the wizards did not belong to their village, but came from a distance.

It is evident that those who prepare the mboundou can make the draught stronger or weaker, according to their own caprice; and indeed it is said that, when any one who is personally disliked has to drink the poison, it always proves fatal. The accused persons are not allowed to see that it is prepared fairly, but they are permitted to send two friends for that purpose.

A most terrible scene was once witnessed by Du Chaillu. A chief named Mpomo had died, and the people were in a state of frenzy about it. They could not believe that a young and strong man could be seized with illness and die unless he were bewitched, and accordingly a powerful doctor was brought from a distance, and set to work. For two days the doctor went through a number of ceremonies, like those which have been described at page 575, for the purpose of driving out the evil spirits, and at last he announced that he was about to name the wizards. The rest must be told in the narrator's own words:—

"At last, on the third morning, when the excitement of the people was at its height—when old and young, male and female, were frantic with the desire for revenge on the sorcerers—the doctor assembled them about him in the centre of the town, and began his final incantation, which should disclose the names of the murderous sorcerers.

"Every man and boy was armed,—some with spears, some with swords, some with guns and axes; and on every face was shown a determination to wreak bloody revenge on those who should be pointed out as the criminals. The whole town was wrapped in an indescribable fury and horrid thirst for human blood. For the first time, I found my voice without authority in Goumbi. I did not even get a hearing. What I said was passed by as though no one had spoken. As a last threat, when I saw proceedings begun, I said I would make Quengueza punish them for the murders they had done in his absence. But, alas! here they had outwitted me. On the day of Mpomo's death they had sent secretly to Quengueza to ask if they could kill the witches. He, poor man—sick himself, and always afraid of the power of sorcerers, and without me to advise him—at once sent word back to kill them all without mercy. So they almost laughed in my face.

"Finding all my endeavours vain, and that the work of bloodshed was to be carried through to its dreadful end, I determined, at least, to see how all was conducted.

"At a motion from the doctor, the people became at once quite still. This sudden silence lasted about a minute, when the loud, harsh voice of the doctor was heard:

"'There is a very black woman, who lives in a house'—describing it fully, with its location—'she bewitched Mpomo.'

"Scarce had he ended when the crowd, roaring and screaming like so many hideous beasts, rushed frantically for the place indicated. They seized upon a poor girl named Okandaga, the sister of my good friend and guide Adouma. Waving their weapons over her head, they bore her away towards the water-side. Here she was quickly bound with cords, and then all rushed away to the doctor again.

"As poor Okandaga passed in the hands of her murderers, she saw me, though I thought I had concealed myself from view. I turned my head away, and prayed she

might not see me. I could not help her. But presently I heard her cry out, 'Chally, Chally, do not let me die!'

"It was a moment of terrible agony to me. For a minute I was minded to rush into the crowd, and attempt the rescue of the poor victim. But it would have been of not the slightest use; the people were too frantic and crazed to even notice my presence. I should only have sacrificed my own life, without helping her. So I turned away into a corner behind a tree, and—I may confess, I trust—shed bitter tears at my utter powerlessness.

"Presently, silence again fell upon the crowd. Then the harsh voice of the devilish doctor again rang over the town. It seemed to me like the hoarse croak of some death-foretelling raven. 'There is an old woman in a house'—describing it—'she also bewitched Mpomo.'

"Again the crowd rushed off. This time they seized a niece of King Quengueza, a noble-hearted and rather majestic old woman. As they crowded about her with flaming eyes and threats of death, she rose proudly from the ground, looked them in the face unflinchingly, and, motioning them to keep their hands off, said, 'I will drink the mboundou; but woe to my accusers if I do not die.'

"Then she, too, was escorted to the river, but without being bound. She submitted to all without a tear, or a murmur for mercy.

"Again, a third time, the dreadful silence fell upon the town, and the doctor's voice was heard:

"'There is a woman with six children. She lives on a plantation towards the rising sun. She too bewitched Mpomo.'

"Again there was a furious shout, and in a few minutes they brought to the river one of Quengueza's slave-women—a good and much-respected woman—whom also I knew.

"The doctor now approached with the crowd. In a loud voice he recited the crime of which these women were accused. The first taken, Okandaga, had—so he said—some weeks before asked Mpomo for some salt, he being her relative. Salt was scarce, and he had refused her. She had said unpleasant words to him then, and had by sorcery taken his life.

"Then Quengueza's niece was accused. She was barren, and Mpomo had children. She envied him. Therefore she had bewitched him.

"Quengueza's slave had asked Mpomo for a looking-glass. He had refused her. Therefore she had killed him with sorcery.

"As each accusation was recited the people broke out into curses. Even the relatives of the poor victims were obliged to join in this. Every one rivalled his neighbour in cursing, each fearful lest lukewarmness in the ceremony should expose him to a like fate.

"Next the victims were put into a large canoe, with the executioners, the doctor, and a number of other people all armed.

"Then the tam-tams were beaten, and the proper persons prepared the mboundou. Quabi, Mpomo's eldest brother, held the poisoned cup. At sight of it poor Okandaga began again to cry, and even Quengueza's niece turned pale in the face—for even the negro face has at such times a pallor, which is quite perceptible. Three other canoes now surrounded that in which the victims were. All were crowded with armed men.

"Then the mug of mboundu was handed to the old slave-woman, next to the royal niece, and last to Okandaga. As they drank, the multitude shouted: 'If they are witches, let the mboundou kill them; if they are innocent, let the mboundu go out.'

"It was the most exciting scene of my life. Though horror almost froze my blood, my eyes were riveted upon the spectacle. A dead silence now occurred. Suddenly the slave fell down. She had not touched the boat's bottom ere her head was hacked off by a dozen rude swords.

"Next came Quengueza's niece. In an instant her head was off, and the blood was dyeing the waters of the river.

"Meantime poor Okandaga staggered, and struggled, and cried, vainly resisting the

working of the poison in her system. Last of all she fell too, and in an instant her head was hewn off.

"Then all became confused. An almost random hacking ensued, and in an incredibly short space of time the bodies were cut in small pieces, which were cast into the river.

"When this was done, the crowd dispersed to their houses, and for the rest of the day the town was very silent. Some of these rude people felt that their number, in their already almost extinguished tribe, was becoming less, and the dread of death filled their hearts. In the evening poor Adouma came secretly to my house, to unburden his sorrowing heart to me. He, too, had been compelled to take part in the dreadful scene. He dared not even refrain from joining in the curses heaped upon his poor sister. He dared not mourn publicly for her who was considered so great a criminal."

The ceremonies which attend the death of members of the Camma tribe are really remarkable. As soon as the end of a man is evidently near, his relations begin to mourn for him, and his head wife, throwing herself on the bed, and encircling the form of her dying husband with her arms, pours out her wailing lamentations, accompanied by the tears and cries of the villagers who assemble round the house. The other wives take their turns in leading the lamentations, and after his death they bewail him in the most pitiful fashion. These pitiful lamentations are partly owing to real sorrow, but there is no doubt that they are also due to the fear lest any one who did not join in the mourning might be accused of having bewitched her husband to death.

For several days they sit on the ground, covered with ashes, their heads shaved, and their clothing torn to rags; and when the body can no longer be kept in the place, the relatives take it to the cemetery, which is usually at some distance down the river. That, for example, of Goumbi was situated at nearly fifty miles from the place.

No grave is dug, but the body is laid on the ground, and surrounded with different valuables which belonged to the dead man in his lifetime. The corpses of the chiefs or head men are placed in rude boxes, but those of ordinary men are not defended in any way whatever.

For at least a year the mourning continues, and if the dead man has held high rank, it sometimes is continued for two years, during which time the whole tribe wear their worst clothes, and make a point of being very dirty, while the widows retain the shaven head and ashes, and remain in perfect seclusion. At the end of the appointed time, a ceremony called Bola-ivoga is performed, by which the mourning is broken up and the people return to their usual dress.

One of these ceremonies was seen by Dn Chaillu. The deceased had been a tolerably rich man, leaving seven wives, a house, a plantation, slaves, and other property, all which was inherited, according to custom, by his elder brother, on whom devolves the task of giving the feast. Great preparations were made for some days previously, large quantities of palm-wine being brought to the village, several canoe-loads of dried fish prepared, all the best clothes in the village made ready, and every drum, kettle, and anything that could make a noise when beaten being mustered.

On the joyful morning, the widows begin the ceremony by eating a magic porridge, composed by the medicine-man, and are then released formally from their widowhood. They then throw off their torn and soiled garments, wash away the ashes with which their bodies had been so long covered, and robe themselves in their best clothes, covering their wrists and ankles with iron and copper jewellery.

While they are adorning their persons, the rest of the people arrange themselves in little groups in front of the houses, and to each group is given an enormous jar of palm-wine. At a given signal the drinking begins, and is continued without interruption for some twenty-four hours, during which time dancing, singing, and drum-beating are carried on with furious energy. Next morning comes the final ceremony. A large crowd of men, armed with axes, surround the house formerly occupied by the deceased, and, at a signal from the heir, they rush at once at it, and in a few minutes nothing is left but a heap of fragments. These are heaped up and burned; and when the flames die away, the ceremony is over, and the heir is considered as having entered into possession of the property.

There are one or two miscellaneous customs of the Camma people which are deserving of a brief notice. They seem to be rather quarrelsome among themselves, and when they get into a fight use a most formidable club. This weapon is made of heavy and hard wood, and is nearly seven feet long. The thick end is deeply notched, and a blow from the "tongo," as it is called, would smash the skull of a European. The native African, however, sustains heavy blows without being much the worse for it; and, although every tongo will be covered with blood and woolly hair, the combatants do not seem to have sustained much injury.

As they fight, they heap on their adversaries every insulting epithet they can think of: "Your chief has the leg of an elephant," cries one; "Ho! his eldest brother has the neck of a wild ox," shouts a second; "Ho! you have no food in your village," bawls a third; and, according to the narrator, the words really seem to do more damage than the blows.



WATER CUSTOM

When a canoe starts on a long journey, a curious ceremony is enacted. Each man dips his paddle in the water, slaps it on the surface, raises in the air, and allows one drop of the water to fall into his mouth. After a good deal of singing, shouting, and antic-playing, they settle down to their work, and paddle on steadily for hours. When a chief parts from a guest, he takes his friend's hands within his own, blows into them, and solemnly invokes the spirits of his ancestors, calling on them to take care of the departing guest.

CHAPTER L.

THE SHEKIANI AND MPONGWÉ.

LOCALITY OF THE SHEKIANI—MODE OF GOVERNMENT—SKILL IN HUNTING—SHEKIANI ARCHITECTURE—MEDICAL TREATMENT—NATIVE SORCERERS—FATE OF THE WIZARD—A VICTIM TO SUPERSTITION—TREATMENT OF THE POSSESSED—LOCALITY OF THE MPONGWÉ—NATIVE FASHIONS—MPONGWÉ MOURNING—SKILL IN LANGUAGE—THE SUCCESSFUL TRADER AND HIS RELATIONS—DEATH OF THE MONARCH AND ELECTION OF A NEW KING—A MPONGWÉ CORONATION—OLD KING CLASS AND HIS CHARACTER—HIS SICKNESS, DEATH, BURIAL, AND SUCCESSOR.

SCATTERED over a considerable track of country between the Muni and Gaboon Rivers, on the western coast of Africa, are numerous villages of the Shekiani or Chekiani tribe. The Shekiani are divided into numerous sub-tribes, which speak a common language, but call themselves by various names, such as the Mbondemo, the Mbousha, the Mbicho, &c. Each of these lesser tribes is again subdivided into clans or families, each of which has its own head.

The mode of government is very simple, and indeed scarcely deserves the name; for although the chiefs of the different tribes are often called kings, their titles are but empty honours, and their authority is but partially recognised even by the head men of the clans. The kings, indeed, are scarcely distinguishable from their so-called subjects, their houses being the same, and their mode of living but little superior. Still, they are respected as advisers; and in cases of difficulty, a few words from one of these kings will often settle a dispute which threatened to be dangerous.

Owing to their proximity to the coast, the Shekiani are great traders, and, in consequence of their contact with the white man, present a most curious mixture of savageness and civilization, the latter being modified in various droll ways. Take, for example, the Shekiani mode of managing fire-arms. When they go to hunt the elephant for the sake of its tusks, they always arm themselves with trade guns, for which they pay seven shillings and sixpence. The quality of these weapons may be easily imagined, and it is really wonderful how the Birmingham manufacturer contrives to furnish for so small a sum a gun that deserves the name.

Of course it is made to suit native ideas, and consequently it is very large and very heavy, a negro contemptuously rejecting a small and light gun which might be worth thirty or forty pounds. Then the mainspring of the lock is of prodigious strength, and the hammer and pan of proportionate size. Inferior, of course, as is the material, the weapon is really a wonderful article; and, if properly handled, is capable of doing good service. But a negro never handles anything carefully. When he cocks his musket, he wrenches back the hammer with a jerk that would break a delicate lock; when he wants to carry home the game that he has killed, he hangs it to the muzzle of the piece, and so slings it over his shoulder, and, as he travels, he allows it to bang against the trees, without the least care for the straightness of the barrel.

But it is in loading the weapon that he most distinguishes himself. First he pours down the barrel a quantity of powder at random, and rams upon it a tuft of dry grass. Upon the grass come some bullets or bits of iron, and then more grass. Then comes more powder, grass, and iron as before; and not until then does the negro flatter himself that he has loaded his musket. That a gun should burst after such a method of loading is not surprising, and indeed it is a wonder that it can be fired at all without flying to pieces. But the negro insists on having a big gun, with plenty of powder and shot, and he cares nothing for a weapon unless it goes off with a report like a small cannon, and has a recoil that almost dislocates the shoulder.

The Shekiani are of moderate size, not very dark-coloured, and in character are apt to be quarrelsome, passionate, revengeful, and utterly careless of inflicting death or pain. Owing to their unsettled habits, they are but poor agriculturists, leaving all the culture of the ground to the women. Their mode of making a plantation is very simple. When they have fixed upon a suitable spot, they begin to clear it after a very primitive fashion. The men ascend the trees to some ten or twelve feet of height, just where the stem narrows, supporting themselves by a flexible vine-branch twisted hoop-fashion round the tree and their waist. They then chop away at the timber, and slip nimbly to the ground just as the upper part of the tree is falling. The trunks and branches are then gathered together until the dry season is just over, when the whole mass is lighted, and on the ground thus cleared of trees and brushwood the women plant their manioc, plantains, and maize.

Their villages are built on one model. The houses are about twelve or fifteen feet in length by eight or ten wide, and are set end to end in a double row, so as to form a long street. The houses have no windows, and only one door, which opens into the street. At night the open ends of the street are barricaded, and it will be seen that each village thus becomes a fortress almost impregnable to the assaults of native warriors. In order to add to the strength of their position, they make their villages on the crests of hills, and contrive, if possible, to build them in the midst of thorn-brakes, so that, if they were attacked, the enemy would be exposed to their missiles while engaged in forcing their way through the thorns. When such a natural defence cannot be obtained, they content themselves with blocking up the approaches with cut thorn-branches.

The houses are made of the so-called bamboo poles, which are stuck in the ground, and lashed to each other with vine-ropes. The interior is divided at least into two apartments, one of which is the eating and the other the sleeping chamber. Each Shekiani wife has a separate apartment, with its own door, so that the number of wives may be known by the number of doors opening out of the sitting-room.

Although their houses are made with some care, the Shekiani are continually deserting their villages on some absurd pretext, usually of a superstitious character, and, during their travels towards another site, they make temporary encampments in the woods, their rude huts being composed of four sticks planted in the ground, tied together at the top, and then covered with leaves.

It has been mentioned that the Shekiani are careless about inflicting torture. One day M. du Chaillu was staying with one of the so-called Shekiani "kings," named Njambai; he heard terrible shrieks, and was coolly told that the king was only punishing one of his wives. He ran to the spot, and there found a woman tied by her waist to a stout stake, and her feet to smaller stakes. Cords were tied round her neck, waist, wrists, and ankles, and were being slowly twisted with sticks, cutting into the flesh, and inflicting the most horrible torture.

The king was rather sulky at being interrupted in his amusement, but, when his guest threatened instant departure unless the woman were released, he made a present of the victim to her intercessor. The cords had been so tightly knotted and twisted that they could not be untied, and, when they were cut, were found to have been forced deeply into the flesh.

The same traveller gives an account of the cruel manner in which the Shekiani treated an unfortunate man who had been accused of witchcraft. He was an old man belonging to the Mbousha sub-tribe, and was supposed to have bewitched a man who had lately died.

"I heard one day, by accident, that a man had been apprehended on a charge of causing the death of one of the chief men of the village. I went to Dayoko, and asked him about it. He said yes, the man was to be killed; that he was a notorious wizard, and had done much harm.

"So I begged to see this terrible being.

"I was taken to a rough hut, within which sat an old, old man, with wool white as snow, wrinkled face, bowed form, and shrunken limbs. His hands were tied behind him, and his feet were placed in a rude kind of stocks. This was the great wizard. Several



FATE OF THE WIZARD.

lazy negroes stood guard over him, and from time to time insulted him with opprobrious epithets and blows, to which the poor old wretch submitted in silence. He was evidently in his dotage.

"I asked him if he had no friends, no relations, no son, or daughter, or wife to take care of him. He said sadly, 'No one.'

"Now here was the secret of his persecution. They were tired of taking care of the helpless old man, who had lived too long, and a charge of witchcraft by the gree-gree man was a convenient pretext for putting him out of the way. I saw at once that it would be vain to strive to save him.

"I went, however, to Dayoko, and argued the case with him. I tried to explain the absurdity of charging a harmless old man with supernatural powers; told him that God did not permit witches to exist; and finally made an offer to buy the old wretch, offering to give some pounds of tobacco, one or two coats, and some looking-glasses for him—goods which would have bought me an able-bodied slave.

"Dayoko replied that for his part he would be glad to save him, but that the people must decide; that they were much excited against him; but that he would, to please me, try to save his life.

"During the night following I heard singing all over the town all night, and a great uproar. Evidently they were preparing themselves for the murder. Even these savages cannot kill in cold blood, but work themselves into a frenzy of excitement first, and then rush off to do the bloody deed.

"Early in the morning the people gathered together, with the fetish-man—the infernal rascal who was at the bottom of the murder—in their midst. His bloodshot eyes glared in savage excitement as he went around from man to man, getting the votes to decide whether the old man should die. In his hands he held a bundle of herbs, with which he sprinkled three times those to whom he spoke. Meantime a man was stationed on the top of a high tree, whence he shouted from time to time in a loud voice, '*Jocoo! Jocoo!*' at the same time shaking the tree strongly. '*Jocoo*' is devil among the Mbousha, and the business of this man was to drive away the evil spirit, and to give notice to the fetish-man of his approach.

"At last the sad vote was taken. It was declared that the old man was a most malignant wizard; that he had already killed a number of people; that he was minded to kill many more; and that he must die. No one would tell me how he was to be killed, and they proposed to defer the execution till my departure, which I was, to tell the truth, rather glad of. The whole scene had considerably agitated me, and I was willing to be spared the end. Tired, and sick at heart, I lay down on my bed about noon to rest, and compose my spirits a little. After a while, I saw a man pass my window almost like a flash, and after him a horde of silent but infuriated men. They ran towards the river.

"Then, in a little while, I heard a couple of sharp, piercing cries, as of a man in great agony, and then all was still as death.

"I got up, guessing the rascals had killed the poor old man, and, turning my steps towards the river, was met by a crowd returning, every man armed with axe, knife, cutlass, or spear, and these weapons, and their own heads and arms and bodies, all sprinkled with the blood of their victim. In their frenzy they had tied the poor wizard to a log near the river bank, and then deliberately hacked him into many pieces. They finished by splitting open his skull, and scattering the brains in the water. Then they returned; and, to see their behaviour, it would have seemed as though the country had just been delivered from a great curse.

"By night the men—whose faces for two days had filled me with loathing and horror, so bloodthirsty and malignant were they—were again as mild as lambs, and as cheerful as though they had never heard of a witch tragedy."

Once, when shooting in the forest, Du Chaillu came upon a sight which filled him with horror. It was the body of a young woman, with good and pleasant features, tied to a tree and left there. The whole body and limbs were covered with gashes, into which the torturers had rubbed red pepper, thus killing the poor creature with sheer agony.

Among other degrading superstitions, the Shekiani believe that men and women can be changed into certain animals. One man, for example, was said to have been suddenly transformed into a large gorilla as he was walking in the village. The enchanted animal haunted the neighbourhood ever afterwards, and did great mischief, killing the men, and carrying off the women into the forest. The people often hunted it, but never could manage to catch it. This story is a very popular one, and is found in all parts of the country wherever the gorilla lives.

The Shekiani have another odd belief regarding the transformation of human beings into animals. Seven days after a child is born, the girls of the neighbourhood assemble in the house, and keep up singing and dancing all night. They fancy that on the seventh day the woman who waited on the mother would be possessed of an evil spirit, which would change her into an owl, and cause her to suck the blood of the child. Bad spirits, however, cannot endure the sight or sound of human merriment, and so the girls obligingly get up a dance, and baffle the spirit at the same time that they gratify themselves. As in

a large village a good many children are born, the girls contrive to insure plenty of dances in the course of the year.

Sometimes an evil spirit takes possession of a man, and is so strong that it cannot be driven away by the usual singing and dancing, the struggles between the exorcisers and the demon being so fierce as to cause the possessed man to fall on the ground, to foam at the mouth, and to writhe about in such powerful convulsions that no one can hold him. In fact, all the symptoms are those which the more prosaic white man attributes to epilepsy.

Such a case offers a good opportunity to the medicine-man, who comes to the relief of the patient, attended by his assistant. A hut is built in the middle of the street, and inhabited by the doctor and patient. For a week or ten days high festival is held, and night and day the dance and song are kept up within the hut, not unaccompanied with strong drink. Every one thinks it a point of honour to aid in the demolition of the witch, and, accordingly, every one who can eat gorges himself until he can eat no more; every one who has a drum brings it and beats it, and those who have no musical instruments can at all events shout and sing until they are hoarse.

Sometimes the natural result of such a proceeding occurs, the unfortunate patient being fairly driven out of his senses by the ceaseless and deafening uproar, and darting into the forest a confirmed maniac.

THE MPONGWÉ.

UPON the Gaboon River is a well-known negro tribe called Mpongwé.

Perhaps on account of their continual admixture with traders, they approach nearer to civilization than those tribes which have been described, and are peculiarly refined in their manners, appearance, and language. They are very fond of dress, and the women in particular are remarkable for their attention to the toilet. They wear but little clothing, their dark, velvet-like skin requiring scarcely any covering, and being admirably suited for setting off the ornaments with which they plentifully bedeck themselves.

Their heads are elaborately dressed, the woolly hair being frizzed out over a kind of cushion, and saturated with palm oil to make it hold together. Artificial hair is also added when the original stock is deficient, and is neatly applied in the form of rosettes over the ears. A perfumed hark is scraped and applied to the hair, and the whole edifice is finished off with a large pin of ivory, bone, or ebony.

When their husbands die, the widows are obliged to sacrifice this cherished adornment and go about with shaven heads, a custom which applies also to the other sex in time of mourning. In this country mourning is implied by the addition of certain articles to the ordinary clothing, but, among the Mpongwé, the case is exactly reversed. When a woman is in mourning she shaves her head and wears as few and as bad clothes as possible; and when a man is in mourning, he not only shaves his head, but abandons all costume until the customary period is over.

The women wear upon their ankles huge brass rings made of stair rods, and many of them are so laden with these ornaments that their naturally graceful walk degenerates into a waddle; and if by chance they should fall into the water, they are drowned by the weight of their brass anklets.

The Mpongwés are a clever race, having a wonderful aptitude for languages, and swindling. Some of the men can speak several native dialects, and are well versed in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese, using their accomplishments for the purpose of cheating both of the parties for whom they interpret. They are very clever at an argument, especially of that kind which is popularly known as "special pleading," and

will prove that black is white, not to say blue or red, with astonishing coolness and ingenuity.

Clever, however, as they are, they are liable to be cheated in their town by their own people—if indeed those can be said to be cheated who deliberately walk into the trap that is set for them. They will come down to the coast, impose upon some unwary trader with their fluent and plausible tongues, talk him into advancing goods on credit, and then slink off to their villages, delighted with their own ingenuity. As soon, however, as they reach their homes, the plunderers become the plundered. Indeed, as Mr. W. Readevell remarks, "There are many excellent business men who in private life are weak, vain, extravagant, and who seem to leave their brains behind them. Such are the Mpongwés, a tribe of commercial travellers, men who prey upon ignorance in the bush, and are lewoured by flattery in the town."

As soon as the successful trader returns to his village, he is beset by all his friends and relations, who see in him a mine of wealth, of which they all have a share. They sing his praises, they get up dances in his honour, they extol his generosity, eating and drinking all the while at his expense, and never leaving him until the last plantain has been eaten and the last drop of rum drunk. He has not strength of mind to resist the flattery which is heaped upon him, and considers himself bound to reward his eulogists by presents. Consequently, at the end of a week or two he is as poor as when he started on his expedition, and is obliged to go off and earn more money, of which he will be robbed in a similar manner when he returns.

These feasts are not very enticing to our European palate, for the Mpongwé have no idea of roasting, but boil all their food in earthen vessels. They have little scruple about the different articles of diet, but will eat the flesh of almost any animal, bird, or reptile that they can kill.

Among the Mpongwé, the government is much the same as that of the other tribes in Western Equatorial Africa. The different sub-tribes or clans of the Mpongwé are ruled by their head-men, the principal chief of a district being dignified with the title of king.

Dignity has, as we all know, its drawbacks as well as its privileges, and among the Mpongwé it has its pains as well as its pleasures. When once a man is fairly made king, he may do much as he likes, and is scarcely ever crossed in anything that he may desire. But the process of coronation is anything but agreeable, and utterly unlike the gorgeous ceremony with which civilized men are so familiar.

The new king is secretly chosen in solemn conclave, and no one, not even the king elect, knows on whom the lot has fallen. On the seventh day after the funeral of the deceased sovereign, the name of the new king is proclaimed, and all the people make a furious rush at him. They shout and yell at him; they load him with all the terms of abuse in which their language is so prolific; and they insult him in the grossest manner.

One man will run up to him and shout, "You are not my king yet!" accompanying the words with a sound box on the ear. Another flings a handful of mud in his face, accompanied by the same words; another gets behind him and administers a severe kick, and a third slaps his face. For some time the poor man is hustled and beaten by them until his life seems to be worthless, while all around is a crowd of disappointed subjects, who have not been able to get at their future monarch, and who are obliged to content themselves by pelting him with sticks and stones over the heads of their more fortunate comrades, and abusing him, and his parents, and his brothers, sisters, and all his relatives for several generations.

Suddenly the tumult ceases, and the king elect, bruised, mud-bespattered, bleeding, and exhausted, is led into the house of his predecessor, where he seats himself. The whole demeanour of the people now changes, and silent respect takes the place of frantic violence. The head-men of the tribe rise and say, "Now we acknowledge you as our king; we listen to you, and obey you." The people repeat these words after them, and then the crown and royal robes are brought. The crown is always an old silk hat, which, by some grotesque chance, has become the sign of royalty in Western Africa. The state robes are composed of a red dressing-gown, unless a beadle's coat can be procured, and,

arrayed in this splendid apparel, the new king is presented to his subjects, and receives their homage.

A full week of congratulations and festivities follows, by the end of which time the king is in sad need of repose, strangers from great distances continually arriving, and all insisting on being presented to the new king. Not until these rites are over is the king allowed to leave the house.

M. du Chaillu was a witness of the remarkable ceremony which has just been described, and which took place on the coronation of a successor to the old King Glass,



CORONATION.

who, as is rather quaintly remarked, "stuck to life with a determined tenacity, which almost bid fair to cheat Death. He was a disagreeable old heathen, but in his last days became very devout—after his fashion. His idol was always freshly painted and highly decorated; his fetish was the best cared-for fetish in Africa, and every few days some great doctor was brought down from the interior, and paid a large fee for advising the old king. He was afraid of witchcraft; thought that everybody wanted to put him out of the way by bewitching him; and in this country your doctor does not try to cure your sickness; his business is to keep off the witches."

The oddest thing was, that all the people thought that *he* was a powerful wizard, and were equally afraid and tired of him. He had been king too long for their ideas, and they certainly did wish him fairly dead. But when he became ill, and was likely to die, the usual etiquette was observed, every one going about as if plunged in the deepest sorrow, although they hated him sincerely, and were so afraid of his supernatural powers that scarcely a native dared to pass his hut by night, and no bribe less than a jug of rum would induce any one to enter the house. At last he died, and then every one went

to mourning, the women wailing and pouring out tears with the astonishing lachrymality which distinguishes the African women, who can shed tears copiously and long at the same time.

On the second day after his death old King Glass was buried, but the exact spot of his sepulture no one knew, except a few old councillors on whom the duty fell. By way of a monument, a piece of scarlet cloth was suspended from a pole. Every one knew that it only marked the spot where King Glass was *not* buried. For six days the mourning continued, at the end of which time occurred the coronation, and the chief Mpongoni became the new King Glass.

The mode of burial varies according to the rank of the deceased. The body of a chief is carefully interred, and so is that of a king, the sepulchre of the latter being, as has just been mentioned, kept a profound secret. By the grave are placed certain implements belonging to the dead person, a stool or a jug marking the grave of a man, and a calabash that of a woman. The bodies of slaves are treated less ceremoniously, being merely taken to the burying-ground, thrown down, and left to perish, without the honours of a grave or accompanying symbol.

Like other dwellers upon river-banks, the Mpongwé are admirable boatmen, and display great ingenuity in making canoes.

The tree from which they are made only grows inland, and sometimes, when a large vessel is wanted, a suitable tree can only be found some eight or ten miles from the shore. If a canoe-maker can find a tree within two or three miles from the water, he counts himself a lucky man; but, as the trees are being continually cut up for canoe-making, it is evident that the Mpongwé are continually driven further inland.

When a Mpongwé has settled upon a tree which he thinks will make a good canoe, he transplants all his family to the spot, and builds a new homestead for himself, his wives, his children, and his slaves. Sometimes he will economise his labour, and pitch his encampment near three or four canoe-trees, all of which he intends to fashion into vessels before he returns to his village. When the trees are felled, and cut to the proper length—sixty feet being an ordinary measurement—they are ingeniously hollowed by means of fire, which is carefully watched and guided until the interior is burnt away. The outside of the tree is then trimmed into shape with the native adze, and the canoe is ready. A clever man, with a large family, will make several such canoes during a single dry season.

The next and most important business is to get the canoes to the water. This is done by cutting a pathway through the wood, and laboriously pushing the canoe on rollers. In some cases, when the canoe-tree is nearer the sea than the river, the maker takes it direct to the beach, launches it, and then paddles it round to the river.

CHAPTER LI.

THE FANS.

LOCALITY OF THE TRIBE—THEIR COLOUR AND GENERAL APPEARANCE—THE KING OF THE FANS—AN UGLY QUEEN—A MIXED CHARACTER—HOSPITALITY AND CURIOSITY—PIERCE AND WARLIKE NATURE—THEIR CONQUERING PROGRESS WESTWARD—WAR-KNIVES, AXES, AND SPEARS—SKILL IN IRON WORK—THE FAN CROSS-BOW AND ITS DIMINUTIVE ARROWS—WAR SHIELDS AND THEIR VALUE—ELEPHANT HUNTING—THE WIRE NET AND THE SPEAR TRAP—FAN COOKERY, AND DIET IN GENERAL—MORTARS AND COOKING POTS—EARTHEN PIPE-BOWLS—CRAVING FOR MEAT—FATE OF THE SHEEP.

THE remarkable tribe which now comes before our notice inhabits a tract of land just above the Equator, and on the easternmost known limits of the Gaboon River. Their name for themselves is Ba-Fanh, i.e. the Fan-people, and they are known along the coast as the Pasuen.

That they are truly a singular people may be inferred from the terse summary which has been given of them,—namely, a race of cannibal gentlemen. Their origin is unknown; but, as far as can be gathered from various sources, they have come from the north-east, their bold and warlike nature having overcome the weaker or more timid tribes who originally possessed the land, and who, as far as can be ascertained, seems to have been allied to the curious dwarfish race which has been described on page 538.

They cannot be called negroes, as they are not black, but coffee-coloured; neither do they possess the enormous lips, the elongated skull, nor the projecting jaws, which are so conspicuous in the true negro. In many individuals a remarkable shape of the skull is to be seen, the forehead running up into a conical shape. Their figures are usually slight, and their upper jaw mostly protrudes beyond the lower, thus giving a strange expression to the countenance.

The men are dressed simply enough, their chief costume being a piece of bark-cloth, or, in case the wearer should be of very high rank, the skin of a tiger-cat, with the tail downwards. They have a way of adding to their natural heads of hair a sort of queue, exactly like that of the British sailor in Nelson's days, making the queue partly out of their own hair, and partly from tow and other fibres. It is plaited very firmly, and is usually decorated with beads, cowries, and other ornaments. The beard is gathered into two tufts, which are twisted like ropes, and kept in shape by abundant grease.

The King of the Fans, Ndiayai by name, was noted for his taste in dress. His queue divided at the end into two points, each of which was terminated by brass rings, while a number of white beads were worn at the top of his head. His entire body was painted red, and was also covered with boldly-drawn tattoo marks. Round his waist he had twisted a small piece of bark-cloth, in front of which hung the tuft of leopard-skin that designated his royal authority. The whole of the hair which was not gathered into the queue was teased out into little ropelets, which stood well out from the head, and were terminated by beads or small rings. His ankles were loaded with brass rings, which made

great jingling as he walked, and his head was decorated with the red feathers of the uraco. His teeth were filed to points, and painted black, and his body was hung with quantities of charms and amulets.

The women wear even less costume than the men. Unmarried girls wear none at all, and, even when married, a slight apron is all that they use. On their heads they generally bear some ornament, and the wife of Ndiayai—who, as Du Chaillu remarks, was the slickest woman he had ever seen—had a cap covered with white shells, and had made toothing, with which her whole body was covered, the place of clothing. She certainly wore a so-called dress, but it was only a little strip of red Fan-cloth, about four inches wide. Two enormous copper rings were passed through the lobes of her ears, which they dragged down in a very unsightly manner, and on her ankles were iron rings of great weight. These were her most precious ornaments, iron being to the Fans even more valuable than gold is among ourselves. Apparently from constant exposure, her skin was rough like the bark of a tree.

Most of the married women wear a bark belt about four inches wide, which passes over one shoulder and under the other. This is not meant as an article of dress, but only a sort of cradle. The child is seated on this belt, so that its weight is principally sustained by it, and it can be shifted about from side to side by merely changing the belt from one arm to the other. The women are, as a rule, smaller in stature than the men, and are not at all pretty, what pretence to beauty they may have being destroyed by their abominable practice of painting their bodies red, and filing their teeth to sharp points.

From the accounts of those who have mixed with them, the Fans present a strange mixture of characters. They practise open and avowed cannibalism—a custom which is as repulsive to civilized feelings as can well be imagined. They are fierce, warlike, and ruthless in battle, fighting for the mere love of it, with their hand against every man. Yet in private life they are hospitable, polite, and gentle, rather afraid of strangers, and as mildly inquisitive as cats. Both Du Chaillu and Mr. Reade agree in these points, and the latter has given a most amusing account of his introduction to a Fan village. He had been previously challenged on the Gaboon River by a Fan, who forbade the boat to pass, but, on being offered a brass rod per diem as a recompense for his services as guide, "grinned horribly a ghastly smile," which showed his filed teeth, and agreed to conduct the party to the next village. He kept his word like a man, and brought the boat to a village, where our author made his first acquaintance with the tribe.

"I examined these people with the interest of a traveller; they hailed me with the enthusiasm of a mob. The chief's bouse, to which I had been conducted, was surrounded by a crowd of cannibals, four deep; and the slight modicum of light which native architecture permits to come in by the door was intercepted by heads and parrots' feathers. At the same time, every man talked as if he had two voices.

"Oshupu obtained me a short respite by explaining to them that it was the habit of the animal to come out to air himself, and to walk to and fro in the one street of the village.

"Being already inured to this kind of thing, I went out at sunset and sat before the door. Oshupu, squatting beside me, and playing on a musical instrument, gave the proceeding the appearance of a theatrical entertainment.

"And this taught me how often an actor can return the open merriment of the house with sly laughter in his sleeve. One seldom has the fortune to see anything so ludicrous on the stage as the grotesque grimaces of a laughing audience. But oh, if Hogarth could have seen my cannibals!

"Here stood two men with their hands upon each other's shoulders, staring at me in mute wonder, their eyes like saucers, their mouths like open sepulchres. There an old woman, in a stooping attitude, with her hands on her knees, like a cricketer 'fielding out'; a man was dragging up his frightened wife to look at me, and a child cried bitterly with averted eyes.

"After the Fans had taken the edge off their curiosity, and had dispersed a little, I rose to enjoy my evening promenade. All stared at me with increasing wonder. That a

man should walk backwards and forwards with no fixed object is something which the slothful negro cannot understand, and which possibly appears to him rather the action of a beast than of a human being.

"It was not long before they contrived to conquer their timidity. I observed two or three girls whispering together and looking at me. Presently I felt an inquisitive finger laid on my coat, and heard the sound of bare feet running away. I remained in the same position. Then one bolder than the rest approached me, and spoke to me smiling. I assumed an amiable expression as Nature would permit, and touched my ears to show that I did not understand. At this they had a great laugh, as if I had said something good, and the two others began to draw near like cats. One girl took my hand between hers, and stroked it timidly; the others, raising towards me their beautiful black eyes, and with smiles showing teeth which were not filed, and which were as white as snow, demanded permission to touch this hand, which seemed to them so strange. And then they all felt my cheeks and my straight hair, and looked upon me as a tame prodigy sent to them by the gods; and all the while they chattered, the pretty things, as if I could understand them.

"Now ensued a grand discussion; first my skin was touched, and then my coat, and the two were carefully compared. At length one of them happened to pull back my coat, and on seeing my wrist they gave a cry, and clapped their hands unanimously. They had been arguing whether my coat was of the same material as my skin, and an accident had solved the mystery.

"I was soon encircled by women and children, who wished to touch my hands, and to peep under my cuffs—a proceeding which I endured with exemplary patience. Nor did I ever spend half an hour in a Fan village before these weaker vessels had forgotten that they had cried with terror when they first saw me; and before I also had forgotten that these amicable Yaricos would stew me in palm-oil, and serve me up before their aged sires, if so ordered, with as little reluctance as an English cook would crimp her cod, skin her eels alive, or boil her lobsters into red agony."

The Fans are a fierce and warlike people, and by dint of arms have forced their way into countries far distant from their own, wherever that may have been. No tribes have been able to stand against them, and even the large and powerful Bakalai and Shekiani have had to yield up village after village to the invaders, so that in some parts all these tribes are curiously intermingled; and all these are at war with each other. The Fans, however, are more than a match for the other two, even if they were to combine forces, which their short-sighted jealousy will not permit them to do; and by slow degrees the Bakalai and Shekiani are wasting away, and the Fans taking their places. They have even penetrated into the Mpongwe country, so that they proceed steadily from the east toward the sea-board.

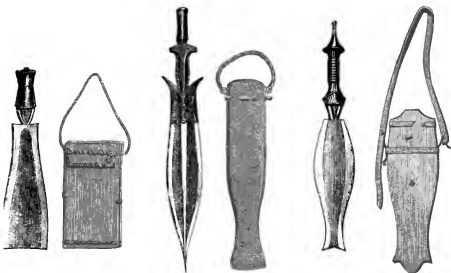
The progress made by the Fans has been astonishingly rapid. Before 1847 they were only known traditionally to the sea-shore tribes as a race of warlike cannibals, a few villages being found in the mountainous region from which the head waters of the Gaboon River take their origin. Now they have passed westward until they are within a few miles of the sea-coast and are now and then seen among the settlements of the traders.

Every Fan becomes a warrior when he obtains the age of manhood, and goes systematically armed with a truly formidable array of weapons. Their principal offensive weapon is the huge war-knife, which is sometimes three feet in length, and seven inches or so in width.

Several forms of these knives are shown in the illustration on page 593. The general shape is much like that of the knives used in other parts of Western Africa. That on the right hand may almost be called a sword, so large and heavy is it. In using it, the Fan warrior prefers the point to the edge, and keeps it sharpened for the express purpose. Another form of knife is seen in the central figure. This has no point, and is used as a cutting instrument. That on the left hand is perhaps one of the most formidable of the three. It is used for delivering a blow on the enemy's shoulder, and it is said to do tremendous execution. Many of them have also a smaller knife, which they

for cutting meat, and other domestic purposes, reserving the large knives entirely for battle.

All these knives are kept very sharp, and are preserved in sheaths, such as are seen in the illustration. The sheaths are mostly made of two flat pieces of wood, slightly hollowed out, so as to receive the blade, and covered with hide of some sort. Snake-skin runs a favourite covering to the sheaths, and many of the sheaths are covered with human skin, torn from the body of a slain enemy. The two halves of the sheath are bound together by strips of raw hide, which hold them quite firmly in their places.



WAR-KNIVES.

Axes of different kinds are also employed by the Fans. One of these bears a singular resemblance to the Neam-Nam war-knife, as seen in the right-hand figure on page 492, and is used in exactly the same manner, namely, as a missile. Its head is flat and pointed, and just above the handle is a sharp projection, much like that on the Neam-Nam knife. When the Fan warrior flings this axe, he aims it at the head of the enemy, and has a knack of hurling it so that its point strikes downwards, and thus inflicts a blow strong enough to crush even the hard skull of a native African.

Then there is another axe, which may be seen below the shield shown on page 596. The reader will not fail to notice the elaborate ornaments with which the blade is covered, and which give evidence of the skill possessed by the native smith. It is rather a heavy weapon, and is not used as a missile, but in hand-to-hand encounters.

Spears are also used, their shafts being about six or seven feet in length, and of some thickness. They are used for thrusting, and not for throwing, and their heads are of various shapes. There is a very good group of them in the museum of the Anthropological Society, exhibiting the chief forms of the heads. These spears, as well as the shield which accompanies them, were brought to England by M. du Chaillu, to whom we are indebted for most of our knowledge concerning this remarkable tribe.

Some of the spear-heads are quite plain and leaf-shaped, while others are formed in rather a fantastical manner. One, for example, has several large and flat barbs set just under the head, another has only a single pair of barbs, while a third looks much like the sword-knife set in the end of a shaft, and so converted into a spear.

All their weapons are kept in the best order, their owners being ever ready for a fray and they are valued in proportion to the execution which they have done, the warrior having an almost superstitious regard for a knife which has killed a man.

All their weapons are made by themselves, and the quality of the steel is really surprising. They obtain their iron ore from the surface of the ground, where it lies about plentifully in some localities. In order to smelt it, they cut a vast supply of wood and build a large pile, laying on it a quantity of the ore broken into pieces. More wood is then thrown on the top, and the whole is lighted. Fresh supplies of wood are continually added, until the iron is fairly melted out of the ore. Of course, by this rough mode of procedure, a considerable percentage of the metal is lost, but that is thought of very little consequence.

The next business is to make the cast-iron malleable, which is done by a series of beatings and hammerings, the result being a wonderfully well-tempered steel. For their purposes, such steel is far preferable to that which is made in England; and when a Fan wishes to make a particularly good knife or spear-head, he would rather smelt and temper iron for himself than use the best steel that Sheffield can produce.

The bellows which they employ are made on exactly the same principle as those which have several times been mentioned. They are made of two short hollow cylinders, to the upper end of which is tied a loose piece of soft hide. A wooden handle is fixed to each skin. From the bottoms of the cylinders a wooden pipe is led, and the two pipes converge in an iron tube. The end of this tube is placed in the fire, and the bellows-man, by working the handles up and down alternately, drives a constant stream of air into the fire.

Their anvils and hammers are equally simple; and yet, with such rude materials, they contrive, by dint of patient working, to turn out admirable specimens of blacksmith's work. All their best weapons are decorated with intricate patterns engraved on the blades, and, as time is no object to them, they will spend many months on the figuring and finishing of a single axe-blade. The patterns are made by means of a small chisel and a hammer. Some of their ruder knives are not intended as weapons of war, but merely as instruments by which they can cut down the trees and brushwood that are in the way when they want to clear a spot for agriculture. It will now be seen why iron is so valuable a commodity among the Fans, and why a couple of heavy anklets made of this precious metal should be so valued by the women.

There is one very singular weapon among the Fans. Perhaps there is no part of the world where we could less expect to find the crossbow than among a cannibal tribe at the head of the Gaboon. Yet there the crossbow is regularly used as an engine of war, and a most formidable weapon it is, giving its possessors a terrible advantage over their foes. One of these bows is shown in the illustration on page 595. It was brought from the Fan country by M. du Chaillu, and is now in the collection of Colonel Lane Fox. The ingenuity exhibited in the manufacture of this weapon is very great, and the careful observer cannot but wonder at the odd mixture of cleverness and stupidity which its structure shows.

The bow is very strong, and when the warrior wishes to bend it he seats himself on the ground, puts his foot against the bow, and so has both hands at liberty, by which he can haul the cord into the notch which holds it until it is released by the trigger. The shaft is about five feet long, and, as may be seen from the illustration, is split for a considerable portion of its length. The little stick which is thrust between the split portions constitutes the trigger, and the method of using it is as follows:—

Just below the notch which holds the string is a round hole through which passes a short peg. The other end of the peg, which is made of very hard wood, is fixed into the lower half of the split shaft, and plays freely through the hole. When the two halves of the shaft are separated by the trigger, the peg is pulled through the hole, and allows the cord to rest in the notch. But as soon as the trigger is removed the two halves close together, and the peg is thus driven up through the hole, knocking the cord out of the notch. I have in my collection a Chinese crossbow, the string of which is released on exactly the same principle.

Of course, an accurate aim is out of the question, for the trigger-peg is held so tightly between the two halves of the shaft that it cannot be pulled out without so great an effort that any aim must be effectually deranged.

But in the use of this weapon aim is of very little consequence, as the bow is only used at very short ranges, fifteen yards being about the longest distance at which a Fan



CROSSBOW.

uses to expend an arrow. The arrows themselves are not calculated for long ranges, as they are merely little strips of wood a foot or so in length, and about the sixth of an inch in diameter. They owe their terrors, not to their sharpness, nor to the velocity with which they are impelled, but to the poison with which their tips are imbued. Indeed, they are so extremely light that they cannot be merely laid on the groove of the shaft, lest they should be blown away by the wind. They are therefore fastened in their place with a little piece of gum, of which the archer always takes care to have a supply at hand. Owing to their diminutive size, they cannot be seen until their force is expended, and to this circumstance they owe much of their power. They have no feathers, neither does any particular care seem to be taken about their tips, which, although pointed, are not nearly as sharp as those of the tiny arrows used by the Dyaks of Borneo or the Macoushies of the Essequibo.

A quiver full of these arrows is shown in the accompanying illustration. It is made of hide with the hair on it, and is nearly flat, being yet quite large enough to hold a considerable number of the arrows. One of these weapons is seen by the side of the quiver, and affords a good idea of the insignificant appearance of these formidable little darts. The poison with which their points are imbued is procured from the juice of some plant at present unknown, and two or three coatings are given before the weapon is considered to be sufficiently envenomed. The Fans appear to be unacquainted with any antidote for the poison, or, if they do know of any, they keep it a profound secret. The reader may remember a parallel instance among the Bosjesmans, with regard to the antidote for the poison-grub.



QUIVER AND ARROWS.

Besides these arrows, they use others about two feet in length, with iron heads, whenever they go in search of large game; but in warfare, the little arrow is quite strong

enough to penetrate the skin of a human being, and is therefore used in preference to the larger and more cumbersome dart.

The only defensive weapon is the shield, which is made from the hide of the elephant. It varies slightly in shape, but is generally oblong, and is about three feet long by two and a half wide, so that it covers all the vital parts of the body. The piece of hide used for the shield is cut from the shoulders of the elephant, where, as is the case with the pachyderms in general, the skin is thickest and strongest. No spear can penetrate the

shield, the axe cannot hew its way through it, the missile knife barely indents it, and the crossbow arrow rebound harmlessly from its surface. Even a bullet will glance off if it should strike obliquely on the shield. Such a shield is exceedingly valuable because the skin of an elephant will not afford material for more than one or two shields, and elephant killing is a task that needs much time, patience, courage, and ingenuity. Moreover, the elephant must be an old one, and, as the old elephants are proverbially fierce and cunning, the danger of hunting them is very great. The shields (marked 1 and 2) in the illustration are taken from the collection of Colonel Lane Fox, as is the hatchet which is seen below them.



SHIELDS AND WAR-AXE.

Like other savages, the Fans have no idea of "sport." He is necessarily a "pot-hunter," and thinks it the most foolish thing in the world to give the game a fair chance of escape. When he goes to hunt, he intends to kill the animal, and cares not in the least as to the means which he uses. The manner of elephant-hunting is exceedingly ingenious.

As soon as they find an elephant feeding, the Fans choose a spot at a little distance when the monkey-vines and other creepers dangle most luxuriantly from the boughs. Quietly detaching them, they interweave them among the tree-trunks, so as to make a strong, net-like harrier, which is elastic enough to yield to the rush of an elephant, and strong enough to detain and entangle him. Moreover, the Fans know well that the elephant dreads anything that looks like a fence, and, as has been well said, may be kept prisoner in an enclosure which would not detain a calf.

When the harrier is completed, the Fans, armed with their spears, surround the elephant, and by shouts and cries drive him in the direction of the barrier. As soon as he strikes against it, he is filled with terror, and instead of exerting his gigantic strength, and breaking through the obstacle, he struggles in vague terror, while his enemies crowd round him, inflicting wound after wound with their broad-bladed spears. In vain does he strike at the twisted vines, or endeavour to pull them down with his trunk, and equally in vain he endeavours to trample them under foot. The elastic ropes yield to his efforts, and in the meanwhile the fatal missiles are poured on him from every side. Some of the hunters crawl through the brush, and wound him from below; others climb up trees, and hurl spears from among the boughs; while the bolder attack him openly, running away if he makes a charge, and returning as soon as he pauses, clustering round him like flies round a carcase.

This mode of chase is not without its dangers, men being frequently killed by the elephant, which charges unexpectedly, knock them down with a blow of the trunk, and then tramples them under foot. Sometimes an unfortunate hunter, when charged by the

mal, loses his presence of mind, runs towards the vine barrier, and is caught in the meshes which he helped to weave. Tree-climbing is the usual resource of a chased iter; and, as the Fans can run up trees almost as easily as monkeys, they find themselves safer among the branches than they would be if they merely tried to dodge the animal round the tree-trunks.

The Fans also use an elephant-trap which is identical in principle with that which is used in killing the hippopotamus,—namely, a weighted spear hung to a branch under which the elephant must pass, and detached by a string tied to a trigger. The natives assisted in their elephant-hunting expeditions by the character of the animal. Suspicious and crafty as is the elephant, it has a strong disinclination to leave a spot where it finds the food which it likes best; and in consequence of this peculiarity, whenever an elephant is discovered, the Fans feel sure that it will remain in the same place for several days, and take their measures accordingly.

When they have killed an elephant, they utilize nearly the whole of the enormous carcass, taking out the tusks for sale, using the skin of the back for shields, and eating the whole of the flesh. To European palates the flesh of the elephant is distasteful, partly on account of its peculiar flavour, and partly because the cookery of the native is not of the best character. M. du Chaillu speaks of it in very contemptuous terms. "The elephant meat, of which the Fans seem to be very fond, and which they have been cooking and smoking for three days, is the toughest and most disagreeable I ever tasted. I cannot explain its taste, because we have no flesh which tastes like it, but it seems full of muscular fibre or gristle; and when it has been boiled for two days, twelve hours each day, it is still tough. The flavour is not unpleasant; but, though I had tried at different times to accustom myself to it, I found only that my disgust grew greater."

Whether elephant-meat is governed by the same culinary laws as ox-meat remains to be seen; but, if such be the case, the cook who *boiled* the meat for twenty-four hours seems to have ingeniously hit upon a plan that would make the best beef tough, stringy, tasteless, and almost uneatable. Had it been gently simmered for six hours, the result might have been different; but to boil meat for twenty-four hours by way of making it tender is as absurd as boiling an egg for the same period by way of making it soft.

As to their diet in general, the Fans do not deserve a very high culinary rank. They have plenty of material, and very slight notions of using it. The manioc affords them a large portion of their vegetable food, and is particularly valuable on account of the ease with which it is cultivated, a portion of the stem carelessly placed in the ground producing in a single season two or three large roots. The leaves are also boiled and eaten. Pumpkins of different kinds are largely cultivated, and even the seeds are rendered edible. M. du Chaillu says that during the pumpkin season the villages seem covered with the seeds, which are spread out to dry, and, when dried, they are packed in leaves and hung in the smoke over the fireplace, in order to keep off the attacks of an insect which injures them.

When they are to be eaten, they are first boiled, and then the skin is removed. The seeds are next placed in a mortar together with a little sweet oil, and are pounded into a soft, pulpy mass, which is finally cooked over the fire, either in an earthen pot or in a plantain leaf. This is a very palatable sort of food, and some persons prefer it to the pumpkin itself.

The mortars are not in the least like those of Europe, being long narrow troughs, two feet in length, two or three inches deep, and seven or eight wide. Each family has one or two of these small implements, but there are always some enormous mortars for the common use of the village, which are employed in pounding manioc. When the seed is pounded into a paste, it is formed into cakes, and can be kept for some little time.

The cooking pots are made of clay, and formed with wonderful accuracy, seeing that the Fans have no idea of the potter's wheel, even in its simplest forms. Their cooking-pots are round and flat, and are shaped something like milk-pans. They also make clay water-bottles of quite a classical shape, and vessels for palm-wine are made from the same material. These wine-jars are shaped much like the amphoræ of the ancients.

The clay is moulded by hand, dried thoroughly in the sun, and then baked in a fire. The exterior is adorned with patterns much like those on the knives and axes.

The Fans also make the bowls of their pipes of the same clay, but always form the stems of wood. The richer among them make their pipes entirely of iron, and prefer them, in spite of their weight and apparent inconvenience, to any others. They also make very ingenious water-bottles out of reeds, and, in order to render them water-tight, plaster them within and without with a vegetable gum. This gum is first softened in the fire, and laid on the vessel like pitch. It has a very unpleasant flavour until it is quite seasoned, and is therefore kept under water for several weeks before it is used.

Like some other savage tribes, the Fans have a craving for meat, which sometimes becomes so powerful as to deserve the name of a disease. The elephant affords enough meat to quell this disease for a considerable time, and therefore they have a great liking for the flesh of this animal. But the great luxury of a Fan is the flesh of a sheep, an animal which they can scarcely ever procure. Mr. W. Reade, in his "Savage Africa," gives a most amusing description of the sensation produced among his Fan boatmen:—

"Before I left the village I engaged another man, which gave me a crew of eight. I also purchased a smooth-skinned sheep, and upon this poor animal, as it lay shackled in our prow, many a hungry eye was east. When it bleated the whole crew burst into one loud carnivorous grin. Bushmen can sometimes enjoy a joint of stringy venison, a cut off a smoked elephant, a boiled monkey, or a grilled snake; but a sheep—a real domestic sheep!—an animal which had long been looked upon as the pride of their village, the eyesore of their poorer neighbours—which they had been in the habit of calling 'brother,' and upon whom they had lavished all the privileges of a fellow-citizen!

"That fate should have sent the white and wealthy offspring of the sea to place this delicacy within their reach was something too strong and sudden for their feeble minds. They were unsettled; they could not paddle properly; their souls (which are certainly in their stomachs, wherever ours may be) were restless and quivering towards that sheep, as (I have to invent metaphors) the needle ere it rests upon its star.

"When one travels in the company of cannibals, it is bad policy to let them become too hungry. At mid-day I gave orders that the sheep should be killed. There was a yell of triumph, a broad knife steeped in blood, a long struggle; then three fires blazed forth, three clay pots were placed thereon, and filled with the bleeding limbs of the deceased. On an occasion like this, the negro is endowed for a few moments with the energy and promptitude of the European.

"Nor would I complain of needless delay in its preparation for the table—which was red clay covered with grass. The mutton, having been slightly warmed, was rapidly devoured.

"After this they wished to recline among the fragments of the feast, and enjoy a sweet digestive repose. But then the white man arose, and exercised that power with which the lower animals are quelled. His look and his tone drew them to their work, though they did not understand his words."

CHAPTER LII.

THE FANS—(*concluded*).

CANNIBALISM AND ITS DEVELOPMENT AMONG THE FANS—NATIVE IDEAS ON THE SUBJECT—EXCHANGE OF BODIES BETWEEN VILLAGES—ATTACK ON A TOWN AND ROBBERY OF THE GRAVES—MATRIMONIAL CUSTOMS—BAROAINING FOR A WIFE—COPPER “NEPTUNES”—THE MARRIAGE FEAST—RELIGION OF THE FANS—THE IDOL-HOUSES—LOVE OF AMULETS—DANCE IN HONOUR OF THE FULL MOON—PLAYING THE HANDJA—ELEPHANTS CAUGHT BY THE FETISH—PROBABLE CHARACTER OF THE “FETISH” IN QUESTION—THE OORILLA AND ITS HABITS—A OORILLA HUNT BY THE FANS—USE OF THE SKULL.

THE preceding story naturally brings us to the chief characteristic of the Fans,—namely their cannibalism.

Some tribes where this custom is practised are rather ashamed of it, and can only be induced to acknowledge it by cautious cross-questioning. The Fans, however, are not in the least ashamed of it, and will talk of it with perfect freedom—at least until they see that their interlocutor is shocked by their confession. Probably on this account missionaries have found some difficulty in extracting information on the subject. Their informants acknowledged that human flesh was eaten by their tribe, but not in their village. Then, as soon as they had arrived at the village in which cannibalism was said to exist, the inhabitants said that the travellers had been misinformed. Certainly their tribe did eat human flesh, but no one in their village did so. But, if they wanted to see cannibalism, they must go back to the village from which they had just come, and there they would find it in full force.

Knowing this peculiarity, Mr. W. Reade took care to ask no questions on the subject until he had passed through all the places previously visited by white men, and then questioned an old and very polite cannibal. His answer were plain enough. Of course they all ate men. He ate men himself. Man's flesh was very good, and was “like monkey, all fat.” He mostly ate prisoners of war, but some of his friends ate the bodies of executed wizards, a food of which he was rather afraid, thinking that it might disagree with him.

He would not allow that he ate his own relations when they died, although such a statement is made, and has not as yet been disproved. Some travellers say that the Fans do not eat people of their own village, but live on terms of barter with neighbouring villages, amicably exchanging their dead for culinary purposes. The Oshebas, another cannibal tribe of the same country, keep up friendly relations with the Fans, and exchange the bodies of the dead with them. The bodies of slaves are also sold for the pot, and are tolerably cheap, a dead slave costing, on the average, one small elephant's tusk.

The friendly Fan above mentioned held, in common with many of his dark countrymen, the belief that all white men were cannibals. “These,” said a Bakalai slave, on first beholding a white man, “are the men that eat us!” So he asked Mr. Reade why

the white men take the trouble to send to Africa for negroes, when they could eat as many white men as they liked in their own land. His interlocutor, having an eye to the possible future, discreetly answered that they were obliged to do so, *because the flesh of white men was deadly poison*, with which answer the worthy cannibal was perfectly satisfied.

Just before M. du Chaillu came among the Fans a strange and wild incident had occurred. It has already been mentioned that the Fans have been for some years pushing their way westward, forming part of the vast stream of human life that continually pours



ATTACK ON A MPONGWÉ VILLAGE.

over the great mountain wall that divides Central Africa from the coast tribes. After passing through various districts, and conquering their inhabitants, they came upon a village of the Mpongwé, and, according to their wont, attacked it. The Mpongwé were utterly incapable of resisting these warlike and ferocious invaders, and soon fled from their homes, leaving them in the hands of the enemy.

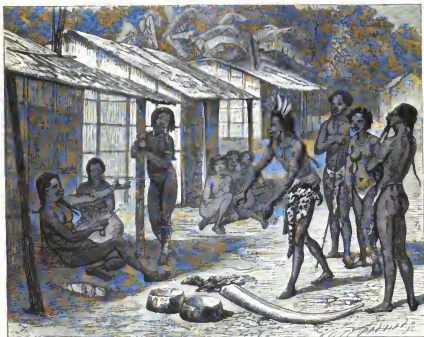
The Fans at once engaged in their favourite pastime of plunder, robbing every hut that they could find, and, when they had cleared all the houses, invading the burial-grounds, and digging up the bodies of the chiefs for the sake of the ornaments, weapons, and tools which are buried with them.

They had filled two canoes with their stolen treasures when they came upon a grave containing a newly-buried body. This they at once exhumed, and, taking it to a convenient spot under some mangrove-trees, lighted a fire, and cooked the body in the very pots which they had found in the same grave with it. The reader will remember that the Mpongwé tribe bury with the bodies of their principal men the articles which they possessed in life, and that a chief's grave is therefore a perfect treasure-house

All bodies, however, are not devoured, those of the kings and great chiefs being buried together with their best apparel and most valuable ornaments.

The matrimonial customs of the Fans deserve a brief notice.

The reader may remember that, as a general rule, the native African race is not a prolific one—at all events in its own land, though, when imported to other countries as slaves, the Africans have large families. Children are greatly desired by the native tribes because they add to the dignity of the parent, and the lack of children is one of the reasons why polygamy is so universally practised; and, as a rule, a man has more wives



BARGAINING FOR A WIFE.

than children. Yet the Fans offered a remarkable exception to this rule, probably on account of the fact that they do not marry until their wives have fairly arrived at woman's estate. They certainly betroth their female children at a very early age, often as soon as they are born, but the actual marriage does not take place until the child has become a woman, and in the meantime the betrothed girl remains with her parents, and is not allowed that unrestricted licence which prevails among so many of the African tribes.

This early betrothal is a necessity, as the price demanded for a wife is a very heavy one, and a man has to work for a long time before he can gather sufficient property for the purchase. Now that the Fans have forced themselves into the trading parts of the country, "traders' goods" are the only articles that the father will accept in return for his daughter; and, as those goods are only to be bought with ivory, the Fan bridegroom has to kill a great number of elephants before he can claim his wife.

Bargaining for a wife is often a very amusing scene, especially if the father has been sufficiently sure of his daughter's beauty to refrain from betrothing her as a child, and to

put her up, as it were, to auction when she is nearly old enough to be married. The dusky suitor dresses himself in his best apparel, and waits on the father, in order to open the negotiation.

His business is, of course, to depreciate the beauty of the girl, to represent that, although she may be very pretty as a child of eleven or twelve, she will have fallen off in her good looks when she is a mature woman of fourteen or fifteen. The father, on the contrary, extols the value of his daughter, speaks slightly of the suitor as a man quite beneath his notice, and forthwith sets a price on her that the richest warrior could not hope to pay. Copper and brass pans, technically called "neptunes," are the chief articles of barter among the Fans, who, however, do not use them for cooking, preferring for this purpose their own clay pots, but merely for a convenient mode of carrying a certain weight of precious metal. Anklets and armlets of copper are also much valued, and so are white heads, while of late years the abominable "trade-guns" have become indispensable.

At last, after multitudinous arguments on both sides, the affair is settled, and the price of the girl agreed upon. Part is generally paid at the time by way of earnest, and the bridegroom promises to pay the remainder when he comes for his wife.

As soon as the day of the wedding is fixed, the bridegroom and his friends begin to make preparations for the grand feast with which they are expected to entertain a vast number of guests. Some of them go off and busy themselves in hunting elephants, smoking and drying the flesh, and preserving the tusks for sale. Others prepare large quantities of manioc bread and plantains, while others find a congenial occupation in brewing great quantities of palm-wine. Hunters are also engaged for the purpose of keeping up the supply of meat.

When the day is fixed, all the inhabitants of the village assemble, and the bride is handed over to her husband, who has already paid her price.

Both are, of course, dressed in their very best. The bride wears, as is the custom among unmarried females, nothing but red paint and as many ornaments as she can manage to procure. Her hair is decorated with great quantities of white beads, and her wrists and ankles are hidden under a profusion of brass and copper rings. The bridegroom oils his body until his skin shines like a mirror, blackens and polishes his well-filed teeth, adorns his head with a tuft of brightly-coloured feathers, and ties round his waist the handsomest skin which he possesses.

A scene of unrestrained jollity then commences. The guests, sometimes several hundred in number, keep up the feast for three or four days in succession, eating elephants' flesh, drinking palm-wine, and dancing, until the powers of nature are quite exhausted, and then sleeping for an hour or two with the happy facility that distinguishes the native African. Awaking from their brief slumber, they begin the feast afresh, and after the first few hours scarcely one of the guests is sober, or indeed is expected to be so. At last, however, all the wine is drunk, and then the guests return to an involuntary state of sobriety.

We now come to the religion and superstitions of the Fan tribe. As far as they have any real worship they are idolaters.

Each village has a huge idol, specially dedicated to the service of the family or clan of which the inhabitants of the village are composed, and at certain times the whole family assemble together at the idol-house or temple, and then go through their acts of worship, which consist chiefly of dancing and singing. Around each of the temples are placed a number of skulls of wild animals, among which the gorilla takes the most conspicuous place. Such spots are thought very sacred, and no one would venture to remove any of the skulls, such an act of desecration being thought a capital offence.

Like many other savage tribes, they are very careless of human life, and have many capital offences, of which witchcraft is the most common. It may seem strange that people who habitually eat the bodies of their fellow-men should have any superstitious feelings whatever, but among the Fans the dread of sorcery is nearly as great as among some of the tribes which have been already mentioned.

Witchcraft, however, is not always punished with death, the offender being sometimes

sold into slavery, the "emigrant" ships having of late years received many Fans on board. It will be seen that the Fans always utilize their criminals. Those who are condemned for theft, or other ordinary crime, are executed, and their bodies eaten. But the wizards are supposed to possess some charms which would make their bodies as injurious after death as the culprits had been during life, and so they sell the criminal for "traders' goods."

No Fan ever dreams of going without a whole host of amulets, each of which is supposed to protect him from some special danger. The most valuable is one which is intended to guard the wearer in battle, and this is to be found on the person of every Fan warrior who can afford it. It is very simple, being nothing but an iron chain with links an inch and a half long by an inch in width. This is hung over the left shoulder and under the right arm, and is thought to be very efficacious. Perhaps such a chain may at some time or other have turned the edge of a weapon, and, in consequence, the illogical natives have thought that the iron chains were effectual preservatives in war.

Next in value comes a small bag, which is hung round the neck, and which is a conspicuous ornament among the men. This is also a battle fetish, and is made of the skin of some rare animal. It contains bits of dried skin, feathers of scarce birds, the dried tips of monkeys' tails, the dried intestines of certain animals, shells, and bits of bone. Each article must have been taken from some rare animal, and have been specially consecrated by the medicine-man. The warriors are often so covered with these and similar fetishes that they rattle at every step, much to the gratification of the wearer, and even the children are positively laden with fetish ornaments.

The reader will remember that throughout the whole of the tribes which have been described runs a custom of celebrating some kind of religious ceremony when the new moon is first seen. This custom is to be also found among the Fans, and has been graphically described by Mr. W. Reade:—

"The full moon began to rise. When she was high in the heavens, I had the fortune to witness a religious dance in her honour. There were two musicians, one of whom had an instrument called *handja*, constructed on the principle of an harmonicon; a piece of hard wood being beaten with sticks, and the notes issuing from calabashes of different sizes fastened below.

"This instrument is found everywhere in Western Africa. It is called *Balonda* in Senegambia; *Marimba* in Angola. It is also described by Froebel as being used by the Indians of Central America, where, which is still more curious, it is known by the same name—*Marimba*. The other was a drum which stood upon a pedestal, its skin made from an elephant's ear. The dull thud of this drum, beaten with the hands, and the harsh rattle of the *handja*, summoned the dancers.

"They came singing in procession from the forest. Their dance was unceasing; their song a solemn tuneless chant; they revolved in a circle, clasping their hands as we do in prayer, with their eyes fixed always on the moon, and sometimes their arms flung wildly towards her.

"The youth who played the drum assumed a glorious attitude. As I looked upon him—his head thrown back, his eyes upturned, his fantastic head-dress, his naked, finely-moulded form—I saw beauty in the savage for the first time.

"The measure changed, and two women, covered with green leaves and the skins of wild beasts, danced in the midst, where they executed a *pas-de-deux* which would have made a *première dansuse* despair. They accompanied their intricate steps with miraculous contortions of the body, and obtained small presents of white beads from the spectators.

"It has always appeared to me a special ordinance of Nature that women, who are so easily fatigued by the ascent of a flight of stairs, or by a walk to church, should be able to dance for any length of time; but never did I see female endurance equal this. Never did I spend a worse night's rest. All night long those dreary deafening sounds drove sleep away, and the next morning these two infatuated women were still to be seen within a small but select circle of 'constant admirers,' writhing their sinuous (and now somewhat odorous) forms with unabated ardour."

The form of *marimba* or *handja* which is used among the Fans has mostly seven

notes, and the gourds have each a hole in them covered with a piece of spider's web, as has already been narrated of the Central African drums. The Fan handja is fastened to



DANCE IN HONOUR OF THE NEW MOON.

a slight frame ; and when the performer intends to play the instrument, he sits down, places the frame on his knees, so that the handja is suspended between them, and then beats on

the keys with two short sticks. One of these sticks is made of hard wood, but the end of the other is covered with some soft material so as to deaden the sound. The Fans have really some ear for music, and possess some pretty though rudely-constructed airs.

Of course the Fans have drums. The favourite form seems rather awkward to Europeans. It consists of a wooden and slightly conical cylinder, some four feet in length and only ten inches in diameter at the wider end, the other measuring barely seven inches. A skin is stretched tightly over the large end, and when the performer plays on it, he stands with bent knees, holding the drum between them, and beats furiously on the head with two wooden sticks.

To return to the Fan belief in charms.

It has already been mentioned that the Fans mostly hunt the elephant by driving it against a barrier artificially formed of vines, and killing it as it struggles to escape from the tangled and twisted creepers. They have also another and most ingenious plan, which, however, scarcely seems to be their own invention, but to be partly borrowed from the tribes through which they have passed in their progress westward. This plan is called the Nghal, that being the name of the enclosure into which the animals are enticed. While Mr. Reade was in the country of the Mpongwe tribe, into which, it will be remembered, the Fans had forced their way, the bunters found out that three elephants frequented a certain portion of the forest. Honourably paying the Mpongwe for permission to hunt in their grounds, they set out and built round an open patch of ground an enclosure, slightly made, composed of posts and railings. Round the nghal were the huts of the Fan bunters. When Mr. Reade arrived there, he was told that the three elephants were within the nghal, sleeping under a tree; and sure enough there they were, one of them being a fine old male with a large pair of tusks. If he had chosen he could have walked through the fence without taking the trouble to alter his pace, but here he was, together with his companions, without the slightest idea of escaping. So certain were the hunters that their mighty prey was safe, that they did not even take the trouble to close the openings through which the animals had entered the nghal. They were in no hurry to kill the elephants. They liked to look at them as they moved about in the nghal, apparently unconscious of the continual hnhbub around them, and certainly undisturbed by it. The elephants were to remain there until the new moon, which would rise in a fortnight, and then they would be killed in its honour.

On inquiring, it was found that the enclosure was not built round the elephants, as might have been supposed. No. It was built at some distance from the spot where the elephants were feeding. "The medicine men made fetish for them to come in. They came in. The medicine men made fetish for them to remain. And they remained. When they were being killed, fetish would be made that they might not be angry. In a fortnight's time the new moon would appear, and the elephants would then be killed. Before that time all the shrubs and light grass would be cut down, the fence would be strengthened, and interlaced with boughs. The elephants would be killed with spears, crossbows, and guns."

The natives, however, would not allow their white visitor to enter the nghal, as he wished to do, and refused all his bribes of beads and other articles precious to the soul of the Fan. They feared lest the presence of a white man might break the fetish, and the sight of a white face might frighten the elephants so much as to make them disregard all the charms that had been laid upon them, and rush in their terror against the fragile barrier which held them prisoners.

As to the method by which the elephants were induced to enter the enclosure, no other answer was made than that which had already been given. In India the enclosure is a vast and complicated trap, with an opening a mile or so in width, into which the elephants are driven gradually, and which is closed behind them as they advance into smaller and smaller prisons. In Africa all that was done was to build an enclosure, to leave an opening just large enough to admit an elephant, to make fetish for the elephants, and in they came.

The whole thing is a mystery. Mr. Reade, who frankly confesses that if he had not with his own eyes seen the nghal and its still open door he would have refused to

believe the whole story, is of opinion that the "fetish" in question is threefold. He suggests that the first fetish was a preparation of some plant for which the elephants have the same mania that cats have for valerian and pigeons for salt, and thinks that they may have been enticed into the nthal by means of this herb. Then, after they had been induced to enter the enclosure, that they were kept from approaching the fence by means of drugs distasteful to them, and that the "fetish" which prevented them from being angry when killed was simply a sort of opiate thrown to them. The well-known fastidiousness of the elephant may induce some readers to think that this last suggestion is rather improbable. But it is also known that, in some parts of Africa, elephants are usually drugged by poisoned food, and that the Indian domesticated elephant will do almost anything for sweetmeats in which the intoxicating hemp forms an ingredient.

That the elephants are prevented from approaching the fence by means of a distasteful preparation seems likely from a piece of fetishism that Mr. Reade witnessed. At a certain time of the day the medicine man made his round of the fence, singing in a melancholy voice, and dabbing the posts and rails with a dark brown liquid. This was acknowledged to be the fetish by which the elephants were induced to remain within the enclosure, and it is very probable that it possessed some odour which disgusted the keen-scented animals, and kept them away from its influence.

Mr. Reade also suggests that this method of catching elephants may be a relic of the days when African elephants were taken alive and trained to the service of man, as they are now in India and Ceylon. That the knowledge of elephant-training has been lost is no wonder, considering the internecine feuds which prevail among the tribes of Africa, and prevent them from developing the arts of peace. But that they were so caught and trained, even in the old classical days, is well known; and from all accounts the elephants of Africa were not one whit inferior to their Indian relatives in sagacity or docility.

Yet there is now no part of Africa in which the natives seem to have the least idea that such monstrous animals could be subjected to the sway of man, and even in Abyssinia the sight of elephants acting as beasts of burden and traction filled the natives with half incredulous awe.

When the Fans have succeeded in killing an elephant, they proceed to go through a curious ceremony, which has somewhat of a religious character about it. No meat is touched until these rites have been completed.

The whole hunting party assembles round the fallen elephant, and dances round its body. The medicine man then comes and cuts off a piece of meat from one of the hind legs and places it in a basket, there being as many baskets as slain elephants. The meat is then cooked under the superintendence of the medicine man and the party who killed the elephant, and it is then carried off into the woods and offered to the idol. Of course the idol is supposed to eat it, and the chances are that he does so through the medium of his representative, the medicine man. Before the baskets are taken into the woods, the hunters dance about them as they had danced round the elephant, and beseech the idol to be liberal towards them, and give them plenty of elephants so that they may be able to give him plenty of meat.

The spirits being thus propitiated, the flesh is stripped off the bones of the elephant, sliced, and hung upon branches, and smoked until it is dry, when it can be kept for a considerable time.

The reader may remember that one of the principal ornaments of the idol temple is the skull of the gorilla, and the same object is used by several of the tribes for a similar purpose. The fact is, all the natives of those districts in which the gorilla still survive are horribly afraid of the animal, and feel for it that profound respect which, in the savage mind, is the result of fear, and fear only. A savage never respects anything that he does not fear, and the very profound respect which so many tribes, even the fierce, warlike, and well-armed Fans, have for the gorilla, show that it is really an animal which is to be dreaded.

There has been so much controversy about the gorilla, and the history of this gigantic ape is so inextricably interwoven with this part of South Africa, that the present work would be imperfect without a brief notice of it.

In the above-mentioned controversy, two opposite views were taken—one, that the gorilla was the acknowledged king of the forest, supplanting all other wild animals, and even attacking and driving away the elephant itself. Of man it had no dread, lying in wait for him and attacking him whenever it saw a chance, and being a terrible antagonist even in fair fight, the duel between man and beast being a combat *à l'outrance*, in which one or the other must perish.

Those who took the opposite view denounced all these stories as "old wives' fables, only fit to be relegated to your grandmother's bookshelves,"—I quote the exact words—and saying that the gorilla, being an ape, was necessarily a timid and retiring animal, afraid of man, and running away when it saw him. It is hardly necessary to mention that M. du Chaillu is responsible for many of the statements contained in the former of these theories—several, however, being confessedly gathered from hearsay, and that several others were prevalent throughout Europe long before Du Chaillu published his well-known work.

The truth seems to lie between these statements, and it is tolerably evident that the gorilla is a fierce and savage beast when attacked, but that it will not go out of its way to attack a man, and indeed will always avoid him if it can. That it is capable of being a fierce and determined enemy is evident from the fact that one of Mr. W. Reade's guides, the hunter Etia, had his left hand crippled by the bite of a gorilla; and Mr. Wilson mentions that he has seen a man who had lost nearly the whole calf of one leg in a similar manner, and who said that he was in a fair way of being torn in pieces if he had not been rescued by his companions. Formidable as are the terrible jaws and teeth of the gorilla when it succeeds in seizing a man, its charge is not nearly so much to be feared as that of the leopard, as it is made rather leisurely, and permits the agile native to spring aside and avoid it.

On account of the structure common to all the monkey tribe, the gorilla habitually walks on all-fours, and is utterly incapable of standing upright like a man. It can assume a partially erect attitude, but with bent knees, stooping body, and incurved feet, and is not nearly so firmly set on its legs as is a dancing bear. Even while it stands on its feet, the heavy body is so ill supported on the feeble legs that the animal is obliged to balance itself by swaying its large arms in the air, just as a rope-dancer balances himself with his pole.

In consequence of the formation of the limbs, the tracks which it leaves are very curious, the long and powerful arms being used as crutches, and the short feeble hind legs swung between them. It seems that each party or family of gorillas is governed by an old male, who rules them just as the bull rules its mates and children.

The natives say that the gorilla not only walks, but charges upon all-fours, though it will raise itself on its hind legs in order to survey its foes. Etia once enacted for Mr. W. Reade the scene in which he had received the wound that crippled his hand. Directing Mr. Reade to hold a gun as if about to shoot, he rushed forward on all-fours, seized the left wrist with one of his hands, dragged it to his mouth, made believe to bite it, and then made off on all-fours as he had charged. And, from the remarkable intelligence which this hideous but polite hunter had shown in imitating other animals, it was evident that his story was a true one.

As to the houses which the gorilla is said to build, there is some truth in the story. Houses they can scarcely be called, inasmuch as they have no sides, and in their construction the gorilla displays an architectural power far inferior to that of many animals. The lodge of the beaver is a palace compared with the dwelling of the gorilla. Many of the deserted residences may be found in the forests which the gorilla inhabits, and look much like herons' nests on a rather large scale. They consist simply of sticks torn from the trees and laid on the spreading part of a horizontal branch, so as to make a rude platform. This nest, if we may so call it, is occupied by the female, and in process of time is shared by her offspring. The males sleep in a large tree.

Shy and retiring in its habits, the gorilla retreats from the habitations of man, and loves to lurk in the gloomiest recesses of the forest, where it finds its favourite food, and where it is free from the intrusion of man.

As to the untamable character of the gorilla as contrasted with the chimpanzee, Mr. Reade mentions that he has seen young specimens of both animals kept in a tame state, and both equally gentle.

We now come to the statement that, when the gorilla is working himself up to an attack, he beats his breast until it resounds like a great drum, giving out a loud booming sound that can be heard through the forest at the distance of three miles. How such a sound can be produced in such a manner it is not easy to comprehend, and Mr. Reade, on careful inquiry from several gorilla-hunters, could not find that one of them had ever heard the sound in question, or, indeed, had ever heard of it. They said that the gorilla had a drum, and, on being asked to show it, took their interlocutor to a large hollow tree, and said that the gorilla seized two neighbouring trees with his hands, and swung himself against the hollow trunk, beating it so "strong-strong" with his feet that the booming sound could be heard at a great distance.

Etia illustrated the practice of the gorilla by swinging himself against the tree in a similar manner, but failed in producing the sound. However, he adhered to his statement, and, as a succession of heavy blows against a hollow trunk would produce a sort of booming noise, it is likely that his statement may have been in the main a correct one.

Now that the natives have procured fire-arms, they do not fear the gorilla as much as they used to do. Still, even with such potent assistance, gorilla-hunting is not without its dangers, and, as we have seen, many instances are known where a man has been severely wounded by the gorilla, though Mr. Reade could not bear of a single case where the animal had killed any of its assailants.

When the native hunters chase the gorilla, and possess fire-arms, they are obliged to fire at very short range, partly because the dense nature of those parts of the forest which the gorilla haunts prevents them from seeing the animal at a distance of more than ten or twelve yards, and partly because it is necessary to kill at the first shot an animal which, if only wounded, attacks its foes, and uses fiercely the formidable weapons with which it has been gifted. Any one who has seen the skull of an adult gorilla, and noticed the vast jaw-bones, the enormous teeth, and the high bony ridges down the head which afford attachment to the muscles, can easily understand the terrible force of a gorilla's bite. The teeth, and not the paws, are the chief, if not the only weapons which the animal employs; and, although they are given to it in order to enable it to bite out the pith of the trees on which it principally feeds, they can be used with quite as great effect in combat.

So the negro hunter, who is never a good shot, and whose gun is so large and heavy that to take a correct aim is quite out of the question, allows the gorilla to come within three or four yards before he delivers his fire. Sometimes the animal is too quick for him, and in that case he permits it to seize the end of the barrel in its hands and drag it to its mouth, and then fires just as the great jaws enclose the muzzle between the teeth. Seizing the object of attack in the hands, and drawing it to the mouth, seems to be with the gorilla, as with others of the monkey tribe, the ordinary mode of fighting.

The hunter has to be very careful that he fires at the right moment, as the gigantic strength of the gorilla enables it to make very short work of a trade gun, if it should happen to pull the weapon out of its owner's hands. A French officer told Mr. Reade that he had seen one of these guns which had been seized by a gorilla, who had twisted and bent the barrel "*comme une papillote*."

The same traveller, who is certainly not at all disposed to exaggerate the size or the power of the gorilla, was greatly struck by the aspect of one that had been recently killed. "One day Mongilambu came and told me that there was a freshly-killed gorilla for sale. I went down to the beach, and saw it lying in a small canoe, which it almost filled. It was a male, and a very large one. The preserved specimen can give you no idea of what this animal really is, with its skin still unshrivelled, and the blood scarcely dry upon its wounds. The hideousness of its face, the grand breadth of its breast, its massive arms, and, above all, its hands, like those of a human being, impressed me with emotions which I had not expected to feel. But nothing is perfect. The huge trunk dwindled into a pair of legs, thin, bent, shrivelled, and decrepid as those of an old woman."



Such being the impression made on a civilized being by the dead body of a gorilla lying in a canoe, the natives may well be excused for entertaining a superstitious awe of it as it roams the forest in freedom, and for thinking that its skull is a fit adornment for the temple of their chief idol.

To a party of native hunters unprovided with fire-arms, the chase of the animal is a vice of real difficulty and danger. They are obliged to seek it in the recesses of its own haunts, and to come to close quarters with it. The spear is necessarily the principal weapon employed, as the arrow, even though poisoned, does not kill at once, and the gorilla is only incited by the pain of a wound to attack the man who inflicted it. Their fear of the animal is also increased by the superstition which has already been mentioned,



GORILLA HUNT.

that a man is sometimes transformed into a gorilla, and becomes thereby a sort of sylvan demon, who cannot be killed—at all events, by a black man—and who is possessed with a thirst for killing every human being that he meets.

Any specially large gorilla is sure to be credited with the reputation of being a transformed man; and as the adult male sometimes measures five feet six inches or so in height, there is really some excuse for the native belief that some supernatural power lies hidden in this monstrous ape.

After a careful investigation, Mr. Reade has come to the conclusion that, except in point of size, there is no essential difference in the gorilla and the chimpanzee, both animals going usually on all-fours, and both building slight houses or platforms in the trees, both changing their dwelling in search of food and to avoid the neighbourhood of man, and both, without being gregarious, sometimes assembling together in considerable numbers.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE KRUMEN AND FANTI.

LOCALITY OF THE KRUMEN—THEIR FINE DEVELOPMENT AND WONDERFUL ENDURANCE—THEIR SKILL IN BOATING—COLOUR OF THE KRUMEN—THEIR VERY SIMPLE DRESS—DOUBLE NOMENCLATURE—THEIR USE TO TRAVELLERS—GOVERNMENT OF THE KRUMEN—THEIR LIVELY AND CHEERFUL CHARACTER—DOMESTIC LIFE OF THE KRUMEN—EARNING WIVES—RELIGION OF THE KRUMEN—THE DEITY "SUFFIN"—KRUMAN FUNERAL—THE GRAIN COAST—THE FANTI TRIBE—THEIR NATIVE INDOLENCE—FANTI BOATS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT—THE KRA-KRA DISEASE—A WILD LEGEND—DRESS OF THE FANTI—IDEAS OF A FUTURE STATE.

ALONG the Grain Coast of Western Africa there is a race of men who come too prominently before European eyes to be omitted from this work. They have, in a degree, lost the habits of their original savage life, but they illustrate so well the peculiar negro character that a small space must be devoted to them.

The name Kru, or Croo, and sometimes Carew, or Crew—so diversified is the orthography of native names—is a corruption of the Grebo word "Kraó." The tribe inhabits a district about twenty-five or thirty miles along the coast, and extending for a considerable, but uncertain, distance inland. A good many smaller tribes have been gradually absorbed into them, and, as they have adopted the language, manners, and customs, as well as the name of Kraó, we will treat of them all under the same title.

In the "Wanderings of a F.R.G.S." there is a curious account of the derivation of the word Grebo, one of the absorbed tribes. According to their own tradition, they originally inhabited the interior, and, finding that their district was too thickly populated, a large number of them determined to emigrate westward, and secretly prepared for departure, the majority being averse to the scheme. As they embarked in a hurry, a number of the canoes were upset, but the remainder succeeded in bounding over the waves. The people who were capsized, and were left behind, were therefore called "Waibo," or the Capsized, while the others took the name of Grebo, from the bounding grey monkey, called Gré.

The Krumen are a fine race, and present a great contrast to the usual slim-limbed and almost effeminate savages of the interior. They are extremely powerful, and are able to paddle for some forty miles at a stretch, without seeming to be the least fatigued at the end of their labours. They are the recognised seamen of the coast, and have made themselves necessary to the traders, and even to Government vessels, as they can stand a wonderful amount of work, and are not affected by the climate like the white sailors.

A Krumen lays himself out for a sailor as soon as he becomes his own master, and is content to begin life as a "boy," so that he may end it as a "man"—i.e. he hires himself out in order to obtain goods which will purchase a wife for him, and by dint of several voyages he adds to the number of his wives, and consequently to the respect in which he is held by his countrymen.

He is a marvellous canoe-man, and manages his diminutive boat with a skill that must be seen to be appreciated. He drives it through the surf with fearless speed, and does nothing for the boiling water around him. "The Kruman," writes Mr. Reade, "squats in it on his knees, and bales the water out with one of his feet. Sometimes he paddles with his hands; sometimes, thrusting a leg in the water, he spins the canoe round when at full speed, like a skater on the 'outside-edge.' If it should capsize, as the laws of equilibrium sometimes demand, he turns it over, bales it out with a calabash, swimming all the while, and glides in again, his skin shining like a seal's."

These singular little canoes are pointed at each end, and crescent-shaped, so that they project fore and aft out of the water. They are very narrow, and are made out of the single trunk of a tree, usually the cotton-wood, or a kind of poplar. The interior is first



KRUMEN AND THEIR CANOES

followed out with fire, next trimmed with an adze, and the ribs are prevented from collapsing by four or five cross-sticks. They are very massively constructed, and, as the wood is very light, they do not sink even if they are filled with water. So small are they, that at a little distance they cannot be seen, and the inmates appear to be treading water.

It is a curious sight to watch a fleet of these canoes come off towards a ship. As soon as an English ship anchors, a swarm of these canoes comes dashing along, their black inmates singing songs at the top of their voices, and shouting "Batee! Batee! Gi' way! Bargri!" and similar exclamations, as they race with each other towards the vessel. No European has been known to manage one of these frail canoes, the usual result of getting into one being that the boat turns over, and deposits the rash adventurer in the sea.

The appearance of the men has been graphically described by the "F.R.G.S." "Conceive the head of a Socrates, or a Silenus, upon the body of the Antinous, or Apollo Belvedere. A more magnificent development of muscle, such perfect symmetry in the balance of grace and strength, my eyes had never yet looked upon. But the faces! Except when lighted up by smiles and good humour—expression to an African face is all in all—nothing could be more unprepossessing. The flat nose, the high cheek-bones,

the yellow eyes, the chalky white teeth, pointed like the shark's, the muzzle protruded like that of a dog-monkey, combine to form an unusual amount of ugliness.

"To this adds somewhat the tribe-mark, a blue line of cuts half an inch broad, from the forehead scalp to the nose-tip—in some cases it extends over both lips to the chin, whence they are called Blue-noses—whilst a broad arrow or wedge, pointed to the face, and also blue, occupies each temple, just above the zygomata. The marks are made with a knife, little cuts into which the oily husk of a gum is rubbed. Their bodies are similarly ornamented with stars, European emblems, as anchors, &c., especially with broad double lines down the breast and other parts.

"Their features are distinctly African, without a mixture of Arab; the conjunctiva is brown, yellow, or tarnished—a Hamitic peculiarity—and some paint white goggle-like ovals round the orbits, producing the effect of a loup. This is sometimes done for sickness, and individuals are rubbed over with various light and dark coloured powders. The skin is very dark, often lamp-black; others are of a deep rich brown, or bronze tint, but a light-complexioned man is generally called Tom Coffee.

"They wear the hair, which is short and kinky, in crops, which look like a Buddha's skull-cap, and they shave when in mourning for their relations. A favourite 'fash' (i.e. fashion) is to scrape off a parallelogram behind the head, from the poll to the cerebellum; and others are decorated in that landscape or parterre style which wilder Africans love. The back of the cranium is often remarkably flat, and I have seen many heads of the pyramidal shape, rising narrow and pointed high to the apex.

"The beard is seldom thick, and never long; the moustachio is removed, and the pile, like the hair, often grows in tufts. The tattoo has often been described. There seems to be something attractive in this process—the English sailor can seldom resist the temptation.

"They also chip, sharpen, and extract the teeth. Most men cut out an inverted V between the two middle incisors of the upper jaw; others draw one or two of the central lower incisors; others, especially the St. Andrews' men, tip or sharpen the incisors, like the Wahiao and several Central African tribes.

"Odontology has its mysteries. Dentists seem, or rather seemed, to hold as a theory that destruction of the enamel involved the loss of the tooth; the Krumen hack their masticators with a knife, or a rough piece of hoop-iron, and find that the sharpening instead of producing caries, act as a preservative, by facilitating the laniatory process. Similarly there are physiologists who attribute the preservation of the negro's teeth to his not drinking anything hotter than blood heat. This is mere empiricism. The Arabs swallow their coffee nearly boiling, and the East African will devour his agali, or porridge, when the temperature would scald the hand. Yet both these races have pearls of teeth, except when they chew lime or tobacco."

The native dress of the men is simple enough, consisting of a pink and white or blue and white check cloth round the waist, and a variety of ornaments, made of skin, metal, glass, or ivory. The latter substance is mostly obtained either from the Gaboon or Cameroon, and is worn in the shape of large arm-rings, cut slowly with a knife, and polished by drawing a wet cord backwards and forwards. Some of the sailor Krumen have their names (i.e. their nautical names) engraved on their armlets, and some of them wear on the breast a brass plate with the name engraved upon it. Of course some of their ornaments are charms or fetishes.

The women present a disagreeable contrast to the men, their stature being short, their proportions ungainly, and their features repulsive. Their style of dress, which is merely a much-attenuated petticoat, displays nearly the whole of the figure, and enables the spectators to form a very accurate opinion of their personal appearance. Of course, the chief part of the work is done by the women, and this custom has doubtlessly some effect in stunting and deteriorating the form.

All the Krumen have two names, one being that by which they are called in their own tongue, and one by which they are known to their employers. It really seems a pity that these fine fellows should be degraded by the ludicrous English names which are given to them. Their own names—e.g. Kofá, Nákú, Tiyá, &c.—are easy enough to speak, and it

would be far better to use them, and not to "call them out of their names," according to the domestic phrase. Here are the names of five men who engaged to take Mr. Reade to the Gaboon: Smoke Jack, Dry Toast, Cockroach, Pot-of-Beer, and—of all names in the world for a naked black man—Florence Nightingale.

They always demand rice, that being a necessity with them, and as long as they get their pint and a half per diem of rice they can stand unlimited work. They cook the rice for themselves in their primitive but effective manner, and feed themselves much as turkeys are crammed, seizing large handfuls of rice, squeezing them into balls, and conveying, in some mysterious way, to swallow them whole without being choked. When they enter the naval service they consider themselves as made men, getting not only their rice, but allowance in lieu of other rations, plenty of clothing, and high wages, so that when they go ashore they are rich men, and take their rank. Of course they are leeched by all their relations, who flock round them, and expect to be feasted for several days, but still the sailor Kruman can buy a wife or two, and set up for a "man" at once. In his own phrase, he is "nigger for ship, king for country." One year is the usual term of engagement, and it is hardly possible to induce Krumen to engage for more than three years, so attached are they to "me country."

Their government is simple. They are divided into four classes, or castes,—namely, the elders, the actual warriors, the probationary warriors, and the priests; the latter term including the priests proper, the exorcists, and the physicians. They are strictly republican, and no one is permitted to accumulate, or, at all events, to display, wealth much above the average of his fellows. Should even one of the elders do so, a palaver is held, and his property is reduced to proper level. This is described by the English-speaking Krumen as the punishment for "too much sass." In fact, property is held on the joint-stock principle, so that the word commonwealth is very applicable to their mode of government.

Capital punishment is rare, and is seldom used, except in cases of witchcraft or murder, and it is remarkable that, in the latter case, no distinction is made between accidental manslaughter and murder with *malice prepense*. The poison ordeal is common here, the draught being prepared from the "sass-wood" of the gidden tree; and there is a wholesome rule that, if the accused survives the ordeal, the accuser must drink it in his turn.

That they are arrant liars, that they are confirmed thieves, and that they have not the slightest notion of morality, is but to say that they are savages, and those who have to deal with them can manage well enough, provided that they only bear in mind these characteristics. If they hear that they are going to some place which they dislike—probably on account of some private feud, because they are afraid of some man whose domestic relations they have disturbed—they will come with doleful faces to their master, and tell him the most astounding lies about it.

Yet they are a cheerful, lively set of fellows, possessing to the full the negro's love of singing, drumming, and dancing. Any kind of work that they do is aided by a song, and an experienced traveller who is paddled by Krumen always takes with him a drum of some sort, knowing that it will make the difference of a quarter of the time occupied in the journey. Even after a hard day's work, they will come to their master, ask permission to "make play," and will keep up their singing and dancing until after midnight. Under such circumstances the traveller will do well to grant his permission, under the condition that they remove themselves out of earshot. Even their ordinary talk is so much like shouting, that they must always be quartered in outhouses, and when they become excited with their music the noise is unendurable.

They are very fond of intoxicating liquids, and are not in the least particular about the quality, so that the intoxicating property be there.

It has already been mentioned that they are arrant thieves, and in nothing is their thieving talent more conspicuous than when they exercise it upon spirituous liquors. They even surpass the British sailor in the ingenuity which they display in discovering and stealing spirits, and there is hardly any risk which they will not run in order to obtain it. Contrary to the habit of most savage people, they are very sensitive to pain,

and a flogging which would scarcely be felt by a Bush boy will elicit shrieks of pain from a Krumen. They dread the whip almost as much as death, and yet they will brave the terrors of a certain flogging in order to get at rum or brandy.

No precautions seem to be available against their restless cunning, and the unwary traveller is often surprised, when he feels ill and wants some brandy as a medicine, that not a drop is to be found, and yet, to all appearance, his spirit-case has been under his own eyes, and so have the rascals who have contrived to steal it. Even so experienced a traveller as Captain Burton, a man who knows the negro character better than almost any European, says that he never had the chance of drinking his last bottle of cognac, it always having been emptied by his Krumen.

Provisions of all kinds vanish in the same mysterious way: they will strangle goats, and prepare them so as to look as if they had been bitten by venomous serpents; and as for fowls, they vanish as if they had voluntarily flown down the throats of the robbers. Anything bright or polished is sure to be stolen, and it is the hardest thing in the world to take mathematical instruments safely through Western Africa, on account of the thievish propensities of the Krumen.

Even when they steal articles which they cannot eat, it is very difficult to discover the spot where the missing object is hidden, and, as a party of Krumen always share their plunder, they have an interest in keeping their business secret. The only mode of extracting information is by a sound flogging, and even then it often happens that the cunning rascals have sent off their plunder by one of their own people, or have contrived to smuggle it on board some ship.

WE now come to the domestic habits of the Krumen as summed up in marriage, religion, death, and burial.

These people are, as has been seen, a prudent race, and have the un-African faculty of looking to the future. It is this faculty which causes them to work so hard for their wives, the fact being, that, when a man has no wife, he must work entirely for himself; when he has one, she takes part of the labour off his hands; and when he marries a dozen or so, they can support him in idleness for the rest of his days.

So, when a young man has scraped together sufficient property to buy a wife, he goes to the girl's father, shows the goods, and strikes the bargain. If accepted, he marries her after a very simple fashion, the whole ceremony consisting in the father receiving the goods and handing over the girl. He remains with her in her father's house for a week or two, and then goes off on another trip in order to earn enough money to buy a second. In like manner he possesses a third and a fourth, and then sets up a domicile of his own, each wife having her own little hut.

However many wives a Krumen may have, the first takes the chief rank, and rules the entire household. As is the case in most lands where polygamy is practised, the women have no objection to sharing the husband's affections. On the contrary, the head wife will generally urge her husband to add to his number, because every additional wife is in fact an additional servant, and takes a considerable amount of work off her shoulders. And an inferior wife would always prefer to be the twelfth or thirteenth wife of a wealthy man, than the solitary wife of a poor man, for whom she will have to work like a slave.

Although the women are completely subject to their husbands, they have a remedy in their hands if they are very badly treated. They run away to their own family, and then there is a great palaver. Should a separation occur, the children, although they love their mother better than their father, are considered his property, and have to go with him.

THEIR religion is of a very primitive character, and, although the Krumen have for so many years been brought in contact with civilization, and have been scdulously taught by missionaries, they have not exchanged their old superstitions for a new religion. That they believe in the efficacy of amulets and charms has been already mentioned, and therefore it is evident that they must have some belief in the supernatural beings who

are supposed to be influenced by these charms. Yet, as to worship, very little is known of it, probably because very little is practised. On one occasion, when a vessel was wrecked, a Kruman stood all night by the sea-side, with his face looking westward, waving the right arm, and keeping up an incessant howling until daybreak. The others looked at him, but did not attempt to join him.

There is one religious ceremony which takes place in a remarkable cavern, called by the euphonious name of Grand Devil Cave. It is a hollow in an enormous rock, having



FETISHES, MALE AND FEMALE.

at the end a smaller and interior cavern in which the demon resides. Evidently partaking that dislike to naming the object of their superstitions which caused the believing in fairies to term them the "Good People," and the Norwegians of the present day to speak of the bear as the "Disturber," or "He in the fur coat," the Kruman prudently designate this demon as "Suffin," *i.e.* Something.

When they go to worship they lay beads, tobacco, provisions, and rum in the inner cavern, which are at once removed by the mysterious Suffin, who is supposed to consume them all. In return for the liberality of his votaries, Suffin answers any questions in

any language. The Krumen believe as firmly in the existence and supernatural character of Suffin as the Babylonians in the time of Daniel believed that Bel consumed daily the "twelve great measures of fine flour, the forty sheep, and the six vessels of wine" that were offered to him. And, as a convincing proof of the danger of incredulity, they point with awe to a tree which stands near the mouth of the Grand Devil Cave, and which was formerly a Krumen who expressed his disbelief in Suffin, and was straightway transformed into the tree in question.

Their mode of swearing is by dipping the finger in salt, pointing to heaven and earth with it, as if invoking the powers of both, and then putting the tip of the finger in the month, as if calling upon the offended powers to avenge the perjury on the person of him who had partaken of the salt. Considering the wolfish voracity of the Krumen, which they possess in common with other savages, they show great self-control in yielding to a popular superstition which forbids them to eat the hearts of cattle, or to drink the blood.

The dead Krumen is buried with many ceremonies, and, notably, a fire is kept up before his house, so that his spirit may warm itself while it is prepared for appreciating the new life into which it has been born. Food is also placed near the grave for the same benevolent purpose. Should he be a good man, he may lead the cattle which have been sacrificed at his funeral, and so make his way to the spirit land, in which he will take rank according to the number of cattle which he has brought with him. Sometimes he may enter the bodies of children, and so reappear on earth. But should he be a bad man, and especially should he be a wizard—*i.e.* one who practises without authority the arts which raise the regular practitioners to wealth and honour—his state after death is very terrible, and he is obliged to wander for ever through gloomy swamps and fetid marshes.

It is a curious fact that the Krumen have some idea of a transitional or purgatorial state. The paradise of the Krumen is called Kwiga Oran, *i.e.* the City of the Ghosts, and before any one can enter it he must sojourn for a certain time in the intermediate space called Menu, or Menuka.

It may be as well to remark here that the Grain Coast, on which the Krumen chiefly live, does not derive its name from corn, barley, or other cereals. The grain in question is the well-known cardamom, or Grain of Paradise, which is used as a medicine throughout the whole of Western Africa, and is employed as a remedy against various diseases. It is highly valued as a restorative after fatigue; and when a man has been completely worn out by a long day's march, there is nothing that refreshes him more than a handful of the cardamoms in a fresh state, the juicy and partly acid pulp contrasting most agreeably with the aromatic warmth of the seeds.

The cardamom is used either internally or externally. It is eaten as a stomachic, and is often made into a poultice and applied to any part of the body that suffers pain. Headache, for example, is said to be cured by the cardamom-seed, pounded and mixed with water into a paste; and, even during the hot fit of fever, the cardamom powder is applied as a certain restorative.



THE FANTI.

THE district of Western Africa, which is now known by the general title of the Gold Coast, Ashantee, or Ashanti, is occupied by two tribes, who are always on terms of deadly feud with each other. Internecine quarrels are one of the many curses which retard the progress of Africa, and, in this case, the quarrel is so fierce and persistent, that even at the present day, though the two great tribes, the Fanti and the Ashanti, have fought over and over again, and the latter are clearly the victors, and have taken possession of the land, the former are still a large and powerful tribe, and, in spite of their so-called extermination, have proved their vitality in many ways.

The Fanti tribe are geographically separated from their formidable neighbours by the Bossumpea River, and if one among either tribe passes this boundary it is declared to be an overt act of war. Unfortunately, England contrived to drift into this war, and, as bad luck would have it, took the part of the Fanti tribe, and consequently shared in their defeat.

It is really not astonishing that the Fanti should have been so completely conquered, as they have been termed by Mr. Duncan, a traveller who knew them well, the dirtiest and laziest of all the Africans that he had seen. One hundred of them were employed under the supervision of an Englishman, and, even with this incitement, they did not do as much as a gang of fifteen English labourers. Unless continually goaded to work they will lie down and hask in the sun; and even if a native overseer be employed, he is just as bad as the rest of his countrymen.

Even such work as they do they will only perform in their own stupid manner. For example, in fetching stone for building, they will walk, some twenty in a gang, a full mile to the quarry, and come back, each with a single stone weighing some eight or nine pounds on his head. Every burden is carried on the head. They were once supplied with wheelbarrows, but they placed one stone in each wheelbarrow, and then put the barrows on their heads. The reason why they are so lazy is plain enough. They can live well for a penny per diem, and their only object in working is to procure rum, tobacco, and cotton cloths. So the wife has to earn the necessaries of life, and the husband earns—and consumes—the luxuries.

The Fanti tribe are good canoe-men, but their boats are much larger and heavier than those which are employed by the Krumen. They are from thirty to forty feet in length, and are furnished with weather boards for the purpose of keeping out the water. The shape of the paddle is usually like that of the ace of clubs at the end of a handle; but, when the canoes have to be taken through smooth and deep water, the blades of the paddles are long and leaf-shaped, so as to take a good hold of the water. The Fanti boatmen are great adepts in conveying passengers from ships to the shore. Waiting by the ship's side, while the heavy seas raise and lower their crank canoes like corks, they seize the right moment, snatch the anxious passenger off the ladder to which he has been clinging, deposit him in the boat, and set off to shore with shouts of exultation. On account of the surf, as much care is needed in landing the passengers on shore as in taking them out of the vessel. They hang about the outskirts of the surf-billows as they curl and twist and dash themselves to pieces in white spray, and, as soon as one large wave has dashed itself on the shore, they paddle along on the crest of the succeeding wave, and just before it breaks they jump out of the boat, run it well up the shore, and then ask for tobacco.

The men are rather fine-looking fellows, tall and well-formed, but are unfortunately liable to many skin discases, among which the terrible kra-kra is most dreaded. This horrible disease, sometimes spelt as it is pronounced, craw-craw, is a sort of leprosy that overruns the entire body, and makes the surface most loathsome to the eye. Unfortu-

nately, it is very contagious, and even white persons have been attacked by it merely by placing their hands on the spot against which a negro afflicted with kra-kra has been resting. Sometimes the whole crew of a ship will be seized with kra-kra, which even communicates itself to goats and other animals, to whom it often proves fatal.

The natives have a curious legend respecting the origin of this horrible disease. The first man, named Raychow, came one day with his son to a great hole in the ground, from which fire issues all night. They heard men speaking to them, but could not distinguish their faces. So Raychow sent his son down the pit, and at the bottom he met the king of the fire-hole, who challenged him to a trial of spear-throwing, the stake being his life. He won the contest, and the fire-king was so pleased with his prowess that he told the young man to ask for anything that he liked before he was restored to the upper air. The boon chosen was a remedy for every disease that he could name. He enumerated every malady that he could recollect, and received a medicine for each. As he was going away, the fire-king said, "You have forgotten one disease. It is the kra-kra, and by that you shall die."

Their colour is rather dark chocolate than black, and they have a tolerably well-formed nose, and a facial angle better than that of the true negro. Their dress is simply a couple of cotton cloths, one twisted round the waist, and the other hung over the shoulders. This, however, is scarcely to be reckoned as clothing, and is to be regarded much as an European regards his hat, *i.e.* as something to be worn out of doors. Like the hat, it is doffed whenever a Fanti meets a superior; this curious salutation being found also in some of the South Sea Islands.

The women when young are ngly in face and beautiful in form—when old they are hideous in both. In spite of the Islamism with which they are brought so constantly in contact, and which has succeeded in making them the most civilized of the West African tribes, the women are so far from veiling their faces that their costume begins at the waist and ceases at the knees. Unfortunately, they spoil the only beauty they possess, that of shape, by an ugly appendage called the "cankey," *i.e.* a tolerably large oblong bag of calico, stuffed into cushion-shape, and then tied by tapes to the wearers back, so that the upper edge and two of the corners project upwards in a very ludicrous way. It is, in fact, only a slight exaggeration of an article of dress which at one time was fashionable throughout Europe, and which, to artistic eyes, had the same demerit of spoiling a good shape and not concealing a bad one. The married women have some excuse for wearing it, as they say that it forms a nice cushion for the baby to sit upon; but the young girls who also wear it have no such excuse, and can only plead the fashion of the day.

Round the waist is always a string of beads, glass or clay if the wearer be poor, gold if she be rich. This supports the "shim," a sort of under-petticoat, if we may so term it, which is simply a strip of calico an inch or so in width, one end being fastened to the girdle of beads in front, and the other behind. They all wear plenty of ornaments of the usual description, *i.e.* necklaces, bracelets, armlets, anklets, and even rings for the toes.

The hair of the married women is dressed in rather a peculiar manner. Though crisp and curly, it grows to nine or ten inches in length, and is frizzled and teased out with much skill and more patience. A boldly-defined line is shaved round the roots of hair, and the remainder of the locks, previously saturated with grease, and combed out to their greatest length, are trained upwards into a tall ridge. Should the hair be too short or too scanty to produce the required effect, a quantity of supplementary hair is twisted into a pad and placed under the veritable locks.

This ridge of hair is supported by a large comb stuck in the back of the head, and, although the shape of the hair tufts differ considerably, it is always present, and always made as large as possible.

The Fanti have their peculiar superstitions, which have never yet been extirpated.

In accordance with their superstitious worship, they have a great number of holy days in the course of the year, during which they make such a noise that a European can scarcely live in the town. Besides uttering the horrible roars and yells which seem unpro-

duccable by other than negro throats, they blow horns and long wooden trumpets, the sound of which is described as resembling the roar of a bull, and walk in procession, surrounding with their horns and trumpets the noisiest instrument of all,—namely, the *kin-kasi*, or big drum. This is about four feet in length and one in width, and takes two men to play it, one carrying it, negro fashion, on his head, and the other walking behind, and belabouring it without the least regard to time, the only object being to make as much noise as possible.

Their fetishes are innumerable, and it is hardly possible to walk anywhere without seeing a fetish or two. Anything does for a fetish, but the favourite article is a bundle of rags tied together like a child's rag doll. This is placed in some public spot, and so great is the awe with which such articles are regarded, that it will sometimes remain in the same place for several weeks. A little image of clay, intended to represent a human being, is sometimes substituted for the rag-doll.

The following succinct account of the religious system is given in the "Wanderings of a F. R. G. S.":—"The religious ideas of the Fanti are, as is usual in Africa, vague and indistinct. Each person has his *Samán*—literally a skeleton or goblin—or private fetish, an idol, rag, fowl, feathers, bunch of grass, a bit of glass, and so forth; to this he pays the greatest reverence, because it is nearest to him.

"The *Bosorus* are imaginary beings, probably of ghostly origin, called 'spirits' by the missionaries. *Abonsám* is a malevolent being that lives in the upper regions. *Sasabonsám* is the friend of witch and wizard, hates priests and missionaries, and inhabits huge silk-cotton trees in the gloomiest forests; he is a monstrous being, of human shape, of red colour, and with long hair. The reader will not fail to remark the similarity of *Sasabonsám* to the East Indian *Rákshasha*, the malevolent ghost of a Brahmin, brown in colour, inhabiting the pipul tree.

"*Nyankupon*, or *Nyawe*, is the supreme deity, but the word also means the visible firmament or sky, showing that there has been no attempt to separate the ideal from the material. This being, who dwells in *Nyankuponfi*, or *Nyankuponkroo*, is too far from earth to trouble himself about human affairs, which are committed to the *Bosorus*. This, however, is the belief of the educated, who doubtless have derived something from European systems—the vulgar confound him with sky, rain, and thunder.

"*Kra*, which the vocabularies translate 'Lord,' is the Anglicised *okro*, or *ocroe*, meaning a favourite male slave, destined to be sacrificed with his dead master; and '*sunsum*, spirit, means a shadow, the man's *umbra*. The Fantis have regular days of rest: Tuesdays for fishermen, Fridays for bushmen, peasants, and so on."

There is very little doubt that the conjecture of the author is right, and that several of these ideas have been borrowed from European sources.

The rite of circumcision is practised among the Fantis, but does not seem to be universal, and a sacred spot is always chosen for the ceremony. At *Acra*, a rock rising out of the sea is used for the purpose.

Burial is conducted with the usual accompaniments of professional mourners, and a funeral feast is held in honour of the deceased. A sheep is sacrificed for the occasion, and the shoulder-bone is laid on the grave, where it is allowed to remain for a considerable time. Sometimes travellers have noticed a corpse placed on a platform and merely covered with a cloth. These are the bodies of men who have died without paying their debts, and, according to Fanti laws, there they are likely to remain, no one being bold enough to bury them. By their laws, the man who buries another succeeds to his property, but also inherits his debts, and is legally responsible for them. And as in Western Africa the legal rate of interest is far above the wildest dreams of European usurers—say fifty per cent. per annum, or per *mcensem*, or per *diem*, as the case may be—to bury an exposed corpse involves a risk that no one likes to run.

One of their oddest superstitions is their belief in a child who has existed from the beginning of the world. It never eats nor drinks, and has remained in the infantile state ever since the world and it came into existence. Absurd as is the idea, this miraculous child is firmly believed in, even by persons who have had a good education, and who say that they have actually seen it. Mr. Duncan, to whom we are indebted for the account of

it, determined to see it, and was so quick in his movements that he quite disconcerted its nurse, and stopped her preparations for his visit.

"Being again delayed, I lost patience, and resolved to enter the dwelling. My African friends and the multitude assembled from all parts of the town, and warned me of the destruction that would certainly overtake me if I ventured to go in without leave. But I showed them my double-barrelled gun as my fetish, and forced my way through the crowd.

"On entering through a very narrow door or gateway, into a circle of about twenty yards' diameter, fenced round by a close paling, and covered outside with long grass (so that nothing within could be seen), the first and only thing that I saw was an old woman who, but for her size and sex, I should have taken for the mysterious being resident there from the time of the creation. She certainly was the most disgusting and loathsome being I ever beheld. She had no covering on her person with the exception of a small piece of dirty cloth round her loins. Her skin was deeply wrinkled and extremely dirty, with scarcely any flesh on her bones. Her breasts hung half way down her body, and she had all the appearance of extreme old age. This ancient woman was the supposed nurse of the immortal child.

"On my entering the yard, the old fetish-woman stepped before me, making the most hideous gestures ever witnessed, and endeavoured to drive me out, that I might be prevented from entering into the god's house, but, in spite of all her movements, I pushed her aside, and forced my way into the house. Its outward appearance was that of a cone, or extinguiser, standing in the centre of the enclosure. It was formed



THE PRIMÆVAL CHILD.

by long poles placed triangularly, and thatched with long grass. Inside it I found a clay bench in the form of a chair. Its tenant was absent, and the old woman pretended that she had by her magic caused him to disappear."

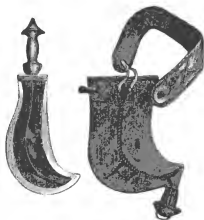
Of course, the plan pursued by the old fetish-woman was to borrow a baby whenever any one of consequence desired an interview, and to paint it with coloured chinks, so that it was no longer recognisable. She would have played the same trick with Mr. Duncan, and, from the repeated obstacles thrown in the way of his visit, was evidently trying to gain time to borrow a baby secretly.

At a Fanti funeral the natives excel themselves in noise-making, about the only exertion in which they seem to take the least interest. As soon as a man of any note is dead,

all his relations and friends assemble in front of his hut, drink, smoke, yell, sing, and fire guns continually. A dog is sacrificed before the hut by one of the relations, though the object of the sacrifice does not seem to be very clear. Rings, bracelets, and other trinkets are buried with the body, and, as these ornaments are often of solid gold, the value of buried jewellery is very considerable. Of course, the graves are sometimes opened and robbed, when the corpse is that of a wealthy person.

One ingenious Fanti contrived to enrich himself very cleverly. One of his sisters had been buried for some time with all her jewellery, and, as the average value of a well-to-do woman's trinkets is somewhere about forty or fifty pounds, the affectionate brother thought that those who buried his sister had been guilty of unjustifiable waste. After a while his mother died, and he ordered her to be buried in the same grave with his sister. The ingenious part of the transaction was that the man declared it to be contrary to filial duty to bury the daughter at the bottom of the grave, in the place of honour, and to lay the mother above her. The daughter was accordingly disinterred to give place to the mother, and when she was again laid in the grave all her trinkets had somehow or other vanished.

The dances of the Fanti tribe are rather absurd. Two dancers stand opposite each other, and stamp on the ground with each foot alternately. The stamping becomes faster and faster, until it is exchanged for leaping, and at every jump the hands are thrown out with the fingers upwards, so that the four palms meet with a sharp blow. The couple go on dancing until they fail to strike the hands, and then they leave off, and another pair take their place.



DAGOOR AND SHEATH.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE ASHANTI.

ORIGIN AND GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE ASHANTI—AN ASHANTI CAPTAIN AND HIS UNIFORM—THE GOLD COAST—GOLD WASHING—THE "TILIKISSI" WEIGHTS—INNOUOUS FRAUDS—THE CABOCEERS, OR NOBLES OF ASHANTI—PORTRAIT OF A MOUNTED CABOCEER—THE HORSE ACCOUTREMENTS—LAW OF ROYAL SUCCESSION—MARRIAGE RESTRICTIONS—THE YAM AND ADAI CUSTOMS—FETISH DRUM AND TRUMPET—DELICIOUS SYSTEM OF ASHANTI—WORSHIP OF EARTH AND SKY—FETISHES—DERIVATION OF THE WORD—THE "KLA," OR FAMILIAR SPIRIT.

WHENCE the Ashanti tribe came is not very certain, but it is probable that they formerly inhabited a more inland part of the continent, and worked their way westward, after the usual fashion of these tribes.

Their traditions state that, about a hundred and fifty years ago, the Ashanti, with several other tribes, were gradually ousted from their own lands by the increasing followers of Islam, and that when they reached a land which was full of gold they took courage, made a bold stand for freedom, and at last achieved their own independence.

At this time the people were divided into a considerable number of states—between forty and fifty, according to one historian. After having driven away their oppressors, they came to quarrel among themselves, and fought as fiercely for precedence as they had formerly done for liberty, and at last the Ashanti tribe conquered the others, and so consolidated the government into a kingdom.

In general appearance, the Ashanti much resemble the Fanti, though they are not perhaps so strongly built. They are, however, quite as good-looking, and, according to Mr. Bowdich, the women are handsomer than those of the Fanti. As a rule, the higher classes are remarkable for their cleanliness, but the lower are quite as dirty as the generality of savage Africans.

As a specimen of the remarkable style of costume in which the Ashanti indulge, a figure of an army captain is introduced on page 623. On his head is a vast double plume of eagles' feathers, surmounting a sort of helmet made of rams' horns, gilt in a spiral pattern, and tied under his chin by a strap covered with cowries. His bow is slung at his back, and his quiver of small poisoned arrows hangs from his wrist, while in his other hand is held an ivory staff, carved in a spiral pattern. His breast is covered with a vast number of little leathern pouches gilt and painted in light colours, mostly scarlet, and from his arms hang a number of horse-tails. Great boots of red hide cover his legs to mid-thigh, and are fastened to his belt by iron chains.

This belt is a very curious piece of leather work. One of these articles is in my collection, and is furnished with the following implements. First comes a small dagger-knife, with a blade about four inches long, and next to it is a little circular mirror about as large as a crown-piece, and enclosed in a double case like that which is now used for prismatic compasses. Then comes a razor, a singularly primitive-looking specimen of

utlery, mounted in a handle which is little more than a piece of stick, with a slit in it. Next comes a leathern pouch about four inches square and one inch in depth, having its interior lined with coarse canvas, and its exterior decorated with little round holes punched in the leather, and arranged in a simple pattern. Lastly comes the razor-strop, a very ingenious implement, consisting of a tube filled with emery powder, and sliding into a sheath so as to allow the powder to adhere to it.

All these articles are protected by leathern sheaths stained of different colours, and are suspended by short straps from the belt.

The country where the Ashanti tribes now live is popularly termed the Gold Coast, on account of the richness with which the precious metal is scattered over its surface. It is found almost entirely in the form of dust, and is obtained by a very rude and imperfect mode of washing. The women are the chief gold washers, and they set about their task armed with a hoe, a basin-shaped calabash, and several quills. With the hoe they scrape up a quantity of sand from the bed of some stream, and place it in the calabash. A quantity of water is then added, and, by a peculiar rotatory movement of the hand, the water and sand are shaken up, and made to fly gradually over the top of the basin.

When this movement is adroitly performed, the water and lighter sand escape from the bowl, while the gold dust sinks by its own weight to the bottom, and is thus separated, and put in the quills. Much skill is required in handling the calabash, and one woman will find a fair supply of gold where another will work all day and scarcely find a particle of the metal.

Of course, by this rude method of work the quantity of gold obtained is in very small proportion to the labour bestowed in obtaining it; and if the natives only knew the use of mercury, they would gain three or four times as much gold as they do at present. The

quills, when filled with gold-dust, are generally fastened to the hair, where they are supposed to be as ornamental as they are precious. The best time for gold-washing is after violent rains, when the increased rush of water has brought down a fresh supply of sand from the upper regions. As one of the old voyagers quaintly remarked, "It raineth seldom, but every shower of rain is a shower of gold unto them, for with the violence of the water falling from the mountains it bringeth from them the gold."

A good gold-washer will procure in the course of a year a quantity of the dust which will purchase two slaves. The average price of a slave is ten "minkali," each minkali being worth about 12s. 6d.; and being valued in goods at one musket, eighteen gun-flints, twenty charges of powder, one cutlass, and forty-eight leaves of tobacco. The reader may judge what must be the quality of the musket and cutlass. Gold is weighed by the little familiar red and black seeds, called in Western Africa "tilikissi," and each purchaser always has his own balances and his own weights. As might be supposed, both vendor and purchaser try to cheat each other. The gold-finder mixes with the real gold-dust inferior sand, made by melting copper and silver together, or by rubbing together copper filings and red coral powder. If larger pieces of gold were to be imitated, the usual plan was to make little nuggets of copper, and surround them with a mere shell of gold. This, of course, was the most dangerous imposition of the three, because the gold coating defied the tests, and the fraud would not be discovered



ASHANTI CAPTAIN.

unless the nugget were cut in two—rather a tedious process when a great number were offered for sale.

As to the buyers, there was mostly something wrong about their balances; while as to the weights, they soaked the tilikissi seeds in melted butter to make them heavier, and sometimes made sham tilikissis of pebbles neatly ground down and coloured.

In spite of all the drawbacks, the quantity of gold annually found in Ashanti-land is very great, and it is used by the richer natives in barbaric profusion. They know or care little about art. Their usual way of making the bracelets or armlets is this. The



CABOCEER AND SOLDIERS.

smith melts the gold in a little crucible of red clay, and then draws in the sand a little furrow into which he runs the gold, so as to make a rude and irregular bar or stick of metal. When cold, it is hammered along the sides so as to square them, and is then twisted into the spiral shape which seems to have instinctively impressed itself on gold workers of all ages and in all countries.

The collars, earrings, and other ornaments are made in this simple manner, and the wife of a chief would scarcely think herself dressed if she had not gold ornaments worth some eighty pounds. The great nobles, or Caboceers, wear on state occasions bracelets of such weight that they are obliged to rest their arms on the heads of little slave boys, who stand in front of them.

The Caboceers are very important personages, and in point of fact were on the eve of becoming to the Ashanti kingdom what the barons were to the English kingdom in the time of John. Indeed, they were gradually becoming so powerful and so numerous, that for many years the king of Ashanti has steadily pursued a policy of repression, and, when

ne of the Caboceers died, has refused to acknowledge a successor. The result of this wise policy is, that the Caboceers are now comparatively few in number, and even if they were ll to combine against the king he could easily repress them.

An umbrella is the distinctive mark of the Caboceers, who in the present day exhibit n odd mixture of original savagery and partially acquired civilization. The Caboceers ave the great privilege of sitting on stools when in the presence of the king. Moreover, these men," says Mr. W. Reade, "would be surrounded by their household suites, like e feudal lords of ancient days; their garments of costly foreign silks unravelled and eaved anew into elaborate patterns, and thrown over the shoulder like the Roman toga, eaving the right arm bare; a silk fillet encircling the temples; Moorish charms, enclosed n small cases of gold and silver, suspended on their breasts, with necklaces made of aggr'y beads,' a peculiar stone found in the country, and resembling the 'glein-ndyr' of he ancient Britons; lumps of gold hanging from their wrists; while handsome girls would stand behind holding silver basins n their hands."

The illustration on page 624 represents a Caboceer at the ead of his wild soldiery, and well indicates the strange mixture of barbarity and culture which distinguishes this as well as other West African tribes.

It will be seen from his seat that he is no very great horse-man, and, indeed, the Caboceers are mostly held on their horses by two men, one on each side. When Mr. Duncan visited Western Africa, and mounted his horse to show the king how the English dragoons rode and fought, two of the retainers ran to his side, and passed their arms round him. It was not without some difficulty that he could make them understand that Englishmen rode without such assistance. The Caboceer's dress consists of an ornamental turban, a jacket, and a loin-cloth, mostly of white, and so disposed as to leave the middle of the body bare. On his feet he wears a remarkable sort of spur, the part which answers to the rowel being flat, squared, and rather deeply notched. It is used by striking or scoring the horse with the sharp angles, and not by the slight pricking movement with which an English jockey uses his spurs. The rowels, to use the analogous term, pass through a slit in an oval piece of leather, which aids in binding the spur on the heel. A pair of these curious spurs are now in my collection, and were presented by Dr. R. Irvine, R.N.

His weapons consist of the spear, bow, and arrows—the latter being mostly poisoned, and furnished with nasty-looking barbs extending for several inches below the head. The horse is almost hidden by its accoutrements, which are wonderfully like those of the knights of chivalry, save that instead of the brilliant emblazonings with which the housings of the chargers were covered, sentences from the Koran are substituted, and are scattered over the entire cloth. The headstall of the horse is made of leather, and, following the usual African fashion, is cut into a vast number of thongs.

One of these headstalls and the hat of the rider are in my collection. They are both made of leather, most carefully and elaborately worked. The hat or helmet is covered with flat, quadrangular ornaments also made of leather, folded and beaten until it is nearly as hard as wood, and from each of them depend six or seven leather thongs, so that, when the cap is placed on the head, the thongs descend as far as the mouth, and answer as a veil. The headstall of the horse is a most elaborate piece of workmanship, the leather being stamped out in bold and rather artistic patterns, and



BOW AND ARROWS.

decorated with three circular leathern ornaments, in which a star-shaped pattern has been neatly worked in red, black, and white. Five tassels of leathern thongs hang from it, and are probably used as a means of keeping off the flies.

The common soldiers are, as may be seen, quite destitute of uniform, and almost of clothing. They wear several knives and daggers attached to a necklace, and they carry any weapons that they may be able to procure—guns if possible; and, in default of firearms, using bows and spears. Two of the petty officers are seen blowing their huge trumpets, which are simply elephant tusks hollowed and polished, and sometimes carved with various patterns. They are blown from the side, as is the case with African wind instruments generally.

In Ashanti, as in other parts of Africa, the royal succession never lies in the direct line, but passes to the brother or nephew of the deceased monarch, the nephew in question being the son of the king's sister, and not his brother. The reason for this arrangement is, that the people are sure that their future king has some royal blood in his veins, whereas, according to their ideas, no one can be quite certain that the son of the queen is also the son of the king, and, as the king's wives are never of royal blood, they might have a mere plebeian claimant to the throne. Therefore the son of the king's sister is always chosen; and it is a curious fact that the sister in question need not be married, provided that the father of her child be strong, good-looking, and of tolerable position in life.

In Ashanti the king is restricted in the number of his wives. But, as the prohibition fixes the magic number of three thousand three hundred and thirty-three, he has not much to complain of with regard to the stringency of the law. Of course, with the exception of a chosen few, these wives are practically servants, and do all the work about the fields and houses.

The natives have their legend about gold. They say that when the Great Spirit first created man, he made one black man and one white one, and gave them their choice of two gifts. One contained all the treasures of the tropics—the fruitful trees, the fertile soil, the warm sun, and a calabash of gold dust. The other gift was simply a quantity of white paper, ink, and pens. The former gift, of course, denoted material advantages, and the latter knowledge. The black man chose the former as being the most obvious, and the white man the latter. Hence the superiority of the white over the black.

Conceding to the white man all the advantages which he gains from his wisdom, they are very jealous of their own advantages, and resent all attempts of foreigners to work their mines; if mines they can be called, where scarcely any subterraneous work is needed. They will rather allow the precious metal to be wasted than permit the white man to procure it. As to the mulatto, they have the most intense contempt for him, who is a "white-black man, silver and copper, and not gold."

It has already been mentioned that more stress will be laid upon Dahome than Ashanti, and that in cases where manners and customs are common to both kingdoms, they will be described in connexion with the latter. In both kingdoms, for example, we find the terrible "Customs," or sacrifice of human life, and in Ashanti these may be reduced to two, namely, the Yam and the Adai.

The former, which is the greater of the two, occurs in the beginning of September, when the yams are ripe. Before the yams are allowed to be used for general consumption, the "Custom" is celebrated; i.e. a number of human beings are sacrificed with sundry rites and ceremonies. There are lesser sacrifices on the Adai Customs, which take place every three weeks, and the destruction of human life is terrible. The sacrifices are attended with the horrible music which in all countries where human sacrifices have been permitted has been its accompaniment.

In the figures on page 627, both of which are taken from specimens in my collection, are shown two of the instruments which are used as accompaniments to the sacrifice of human beings. The first is the Fetish drum, represented in the left-hand figure of the illustration. It is carved with enormous perseverance out of a solid block of wood, and in its general form presents a most singular resemblance to the bicephalous or two-headed gems of the Gnostics. The attentive reader will notice the remarkable ingenuity with

which the head of a man is combined with that of a bird, the latter being kept subservient to the former, and yet having a bold and distinct individuality of its own.

From the top of the united heads rises the drum itself, which is hollowed out of the same hlock of wood. The parchment head of the drum is secured to the instrument by a number of wooden pegs, and it is probable that the heat of the meridian sun was quite sufficient to tighten the head of the drum whenever it became relaxed. Of course, the plan of tightening it by means of a moveable head is not known in Western Africa, and, even if it were known, it would not be practised. The natives never modify a custom. They exchange it for another, or they abolish it, but the reforming spirit never existed in the negro mind.

On the side of the drum may be seen the air-hole, which is usually found in African drums, and which is closed with a piece of spider web when the instrument is used. Sometimes the drums are of enormous size, the entire trunk of a tree being hollowed out for the purpose. The skin which forms the head is mostly that of an antelope, but when the Ashanti wants a drum to be very powerful against strange fetishes, he makes the head of snake or crocodile skin.

The former material holds a high place in the second instrument, which is a fetish trumpet. As is the case with all African trumpets, it is blown flute-fashion, from the side, and not like a European trumpet, from the end.

It is made from the tusk of an elephant, carefully hollowed out, and furnished with a curious apparatus, much like the vibrator in a modern harmonium or accordion. As the instrument has sustained rather rough treatment, and the ivory has been cracked here and there, it is impossible to produce a sound from it; and at the best the notes must have been of a very insignificant character, deadened as they must be by the snake-skin covering. The skin in question is that of a boa or python, which is a very powerful fetish among all Africans among whom the boa lives, and it covers almost the whole of the instrument.

A most weird and uncanny sort of look is communicated to the trumpet by the horrid trophy which is tied to it. This is the upper jaw of a human being, evidently a negro, by its peculiar development, the jaw being of the prognathous character, and the projecting teeth in the finest possible order.

From the mere existence of these sacrifices it is evident that the religious system of the Ashanti must be of a very low character. They are not utter atheists, as is the case with some of the tribes which have already been mentioned; but they cannot be said even to have risen to deism, and barely to idolatry, their ideas of the Supreme Deity being exceedingly vague, and mixed up with a host of superstitious notions about demons, both good and evil, to whom they give the name of Wodsi, and which certainly absorb the greater part of their devotions and the whole of their reverence, the latter quality being with them the mere outbirth of fear.

Their name for God is "Nyonmo," evidently a modification of Nyamye, the title which is given to the Supreme Spirit by the Cammas and other tribes of the Rembo. But



THE FETISH DRUM AND TRUMPET.

Nyonmo also means the sky, or the rain, or the thunder, probably because they proceed from the sky, and they explain thunder by the phrase that Nyonmo is knocking. As the sky is venerated as one deity, so the earth is considered as another though inferior deity, which is worshipped under the name of "Sikpois."

As to the Wodsi, they seem to be divided into various ranks. For example, the earth, the air, and the sea are Wodsi which exercise their influence over all men; whereas other Wodsi, which are visible in the forms of trees or rivers, have a restricted power over towns, districts, or individuals.

The scrap of rag, leopard's claws, sacred chains, peculiar beads, bits of bone, bird-beaks, &c. which are worn by the Wontse, or fetish men, have a rather curious use, which is well explained by the "F.R.G.S.":—"The West Africans, like their brethren in the East, have evil ghosts and haunting *evastra*, which work themselves into the position of demons. Their various rites are intended to avert the harm which may be done to them by their Pepos or Mulungos, and perhaps to shift it upon their enemies. When the critical moment has arrived, the ghost is adjured by the fetish man to come forth from the possessed, and an article is named—a leopard's claw, peculiar heads, or a rag from the sick man's body nailed to what Europeans call the 'Devil's tree'—in which, if worn about the person, the haunter will reside. It is technically called Kehi, or Ketu, i.e. a chair or a stool. The word fetish, by the way, is a corruption of the Portuguese *Feitiço*, i.e. witchcraft, or conjuring."

Their belief respecting the Kra, or Kla, or soul of a man, is very peculiar. They believe that the Kla exists before the body, and that it is transmitted from one to another. Thus, if a child dies, the next is supposed to be the same child born again into the world; and so thoroughly do they believe this, that when a woman finds that she is about to become a mother, she goes to the fetish man, and requests him to ask the Kla of her future child respecting its ancestry and intended career. But the Kla has another office; for it is supposed to be in some sort distinct from the man, and, like the demon of Socrates, to give him advice, and is a kind of small Wodsi, capable of receiving offerings. The Kla is also dual, male and female; the former urging the man to evil, and the latter to good.



CLASP KNIFE AND RAZOR—WEST AFRICA.
(From my Collection.)

CHAPTER LV.

DAHOMÉ.

CHARACTERISTIC OF THE WESTERN AFRICAN—LOCALITY OF DAHOMÉ—THE FIVE DISTRICTS—DAHOMAN ARCHITECTURE—"SWISH" HOUSES—THE VULTURE AND HIS FOOD—THE LEGBA—SNAKE WORSHIP IN DAHOMÉ—PUNISHMENT OF A SNAKE-KILLER—ETIQUETTE AT COURT—JOURNEY OF A MAN OF RANK TO THE CAPITAL—AFRICAN HAMMOCK—SIGNIFICATION OF THE WORD DAHOMÉ—CEREMONIES ON THE JOURNEY—KANA, OR KANANINA, THE "COUNTRY CAPITAL"—BEAUTY OF THE SCENERY—THE OYOS AND GOZO'S CUSTOM—APPROACH TO KANA—A GHASTLY ORNAMENT—"THE BELL COMES"—THE AMAZONS—THEIR FEROCITY AND COURAGE—THEIR WAR TROPHIES AND WEAPONS—REVIEW OF THE AMAZONS—ORGANIZATION OF THE FORCES.

THERE is a very remarkable point about the true negro of Western Africa, namely, the use which he has made of his contact with civilization. It might be imagined that he would have raised himself in the social scale by his frequent intercourse with men wiser and more powerful than himself, and who, if perhaps they may not have been much better in a moral point of view, could not possibly have been worse. But he has done nothing of the kind, and, instead of giving up his old barbarous customs, has only increased their barbarity by the additional means which he has obtained from the white man.

Exchanging the bow and arrows for the gun, and the club for the sword, he has employed his better weapons in increasing his destructive powers, and has chiefly used them in fighting and selling into slavery those whom he had previously fought, and who respected him as long as the arms on both sides were equal. And the strangest thing is that, even considering his captives as so much property, the only excuse which could be found for the savage cruelty with which he makes raids on every town which he thinks he can conquer, he has not yet learned to abolish the dreadful "custom" of human sacrifices, although each prisoner or criminal killed is a dead loss to him.

We now come to one of the strangest kingdoms on the face of the earth, that of Dahomé; a kingdom begun in blood and cruelty, and having maintained its existence of more than two centuries in spite of the terrible scenes continually enacted—scenes which would drive almost any other nation to revolt. But the fearful sacrifices for which the name of Dahomé has been so long infamous are not merely the offspring of a despotic king's fancy; they are sanctioned, and even forced upon him, by his people—fit subjects of such a king.

It is situated in that part of Africa commonly known as the Slave Coast, as distinguished from the Gold, Ivory, and Grain Coasts, and its shores are washed by the waters of the Bight of Benin. Dahomé alone, of the four great slave kingdoms, Ashanti, Yomba, Benin, and Dahomé, has retained its power, and, to the eye of an experienced observer, even Dahomé, which has outlived the three, will speedily follow them.

On its coasts are the two celebrated ports, Lagos and Whydah, which have for so long been the outlets by which the slaves captured in the interior were sent on board the ships.

Lagos, however, has been already ceded to England, and, under a better management, will probably become one of the great ports at which a legitimate trade can be carried on, and which will become one of the blessings instead of the curses of Western Africa.

Whydah, being one of the towns through which a traveller is sure to pass in going into the interior of Dahomé, is worth a passing notice.

In the first place, Captain Burton, from whom the greater part of our knowledge of this strange land is derived, states that the very name is a misnomer. In the first place, we have attributed it to the wrong spot, and in the next we have given it a most corrupted title. The place which we call Whydah is known to the people as Gre-hwe (Plantation House), while the real Hwe-dah—as the word ought to be spelt—belongs rightly to a little kingdom whose capital was Savi.

Originally a port belonging to the king of Savi, and given up entirely to piracy, it passed into the hands of Agaja, king of Dahomé, who easily found an excuse for attacking a place which was so valuable as giving him a direct communication from the interior to the sea, without the intervention of middle-men, who each take a heavy per-centage from all goods that pass through their district. From 1725, when it thus passed into Dahoman hands, it rapidly increased in size and importance. Now it presents an extraordinary mixture of native and imported masters, and we will endeavour to cast a rapid glance at the former.

The place is divided into five districts, each governed by its own Caboceer; and it is a notable fact, that nowadays a Caboceer need not be a native. The post of Caboceer of the Soglaji, or English quarter, was offered to Captain Burton, who, however, could not be tempted to accept it, even by the umbrella of rank—equal to the blue ribbon of our own system.

At the entrance of every town there is the De-sun, or Custom-house, and close by it are a number of little fetish houses, wherein the trader is supposed to return his thanks to the propitiating demons. The streets are formed by the walls of enclosures and the backs of houses; and, as Dahoman architecture is regulated by law, a very uniform effect is obtained. The walls are mud, popularly called "swish," sometimes mixed with oyster-shells to strengthen it, and built up in regular courses, each about two feet and a half in thickness. By law, no walls are allowed to be more than four courses high.

The hot sun soon bakes the mud into the consistence of soft brick; and, were it not for the fierce rains of the tropics, it would be very lasting. As it is, the rainy season is very destructive to walls, and the early part of the dry season is always a busy time with native architects, who are engaged in repairing the damages caused by the rains. There is a small amount of salt in the mud, which increases the liability to damage. On the Gold Coast the natives ingeniously strengthen the swish walls by growing cactus plants; but the negroes of Dahomé neglect this precaution, and consequently give themselves—as lazy people proverbially do—a vast amount of needless trouble.

There are no windows to the houses; but the roofs, made of grass and leaves fastened on a light framework, are made so that they can be partially raised from the walls, like the "fly" of a tent.

In spite of the presence of localized Christian missions, and the continual contact of Islamism, the system of fetishism is rampant in Whydah. No human sacrifices take place there, all the victims being forwarded to the capital for execution. But, according to Captain Burton, "even in the bazaar many a hut will be girt round with the Zo Vodun, a country rope with dead leaves dangling from it at spaces of twenty feet. (Zo Vodun signifies fire-fetish.)

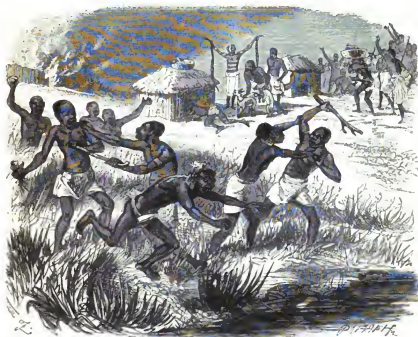
"After a conflagration, this fetish fire-prophylactic becomes almost universal. Opposite the house-gates, again, we find the Vo-siva defending the inmates from harm. It is of many shapes, especially a stick or a pole, with an empty old calabash for a head, and a body composed of grass, thatch, palm-leaves, fowls' feathers, and achatina shells. These people must deem lightly of an influence that can mistake, even in the dark, such a scarecrow for a human being.

"Near almost every door stands the Legba-ghau, or Legha-pot, by Europeans commonly called the 'Devil's dish.' It is a common clay shard article, either whole or broken, and

Every morning and evening it is filled, generally by women, with cooked maize and palm-oil, for the benefit of the turkey-buzzard. 'Akraſu,' the vulture, is, next to the snake, the happiest animal in Dahome. He has always abundance of food, like storks, robins, wallows, crows, adjutant-cranes, and other holy birds in different parts of the world. . .

"Travellers abuse this 'obscene fowl,' forgetting that without it the towns of Yoruba would be uninhabitable. . . The turkey-buzzard perched on the topmost stick of a blasted calabash-tree is to the unromantic natives of Africa what the pea-fowl is to more engaging Asians. It always struck me as the most appropriate emblem and heraldic bearing for decayed Dahome."

The Legba, or idol to whom the fowl is sacred, is an abominable image, rudely moulded out of clay, and represented in a squatting attitude. Sometimes Legba's head is of wood,



PUNISHMENT OF A SNAKE-KILLER

with eyes and teeth made of cowries, or else painted white. Legba is mostly a male deity, rarely a female, and the chief object of the idol-maker seems to be that the worshipper shall have no doubt on the subject. Legba sits in a little hut open at the sides; and as no one takes care of him, and no one dares to meddle with him, the country is full of these queer little temples, inside which the god is sometimes seen in tolerable preservation, but in most cases has sunk into a mere heap of mud and dust. Some of these wooden Legbas are seen on page 615, but they are purposely selected on account of the exceptional delicacy displayed by the carver.

Snakes are fetish throughout Dahome, and are protected by the severest laws. All serpents are highly venerated, but there is one in particular, a harmless snake called the "Danhgbowe," which is held in the most absurd reverence. It is of moderate size, reaching

some five or six feet in length, and is rather delicately coloured with brown, yellow, and white. The Danhgbe is kept tame in fetish houses, and if one of them should stray, it is carefully restored by the man who finds it, and who grovels on the ground and covers himself with dust before he touches it, as he would in the presence of a king. Formerly the penalty for killing one of these snakes was death, but it is now commuted for a punishment which, although very severe, is not necessarily fatal to the sufferer. It partakes of the mixture of the horrible and the grotesque which is so characteristic of this land. Mr. Duncan saw three men undergo this punishment. Three small houses were built of dry sticks, and thatched with dry grass. The culprits were then placed in front of the houses by the fetish-man, who made a long speech to the spectators, and explained the enormity of the offence of which they had been guilty.

They then proceeded to tie on the shoulders of each culprit a dog, a kid, and two fowls. A quantity of palm-oil was poured over them, and on their heads were balanced baskets, containing little open calabashes filled with the same material, so that at the least movement the calabashes were upset, and the oil ran all over the head and body. They were next marched round the little houses, and, lastly, forced to crawl into them, the dog, kid, and fowls being taken off their shoulders and thrust into the house with them. The doors being shut, a large mob assembled with sticks and clods, and surrounds the house. The houses are then fired, the dry material blazing up like gunpowder, and the wretched inmates burst their way through the flaming walls and roof, and rush to the nearest running stream, followed by the crowd, who beat and pelt them unmercifully. If they can reach the water, they are safe, and should they be men of any consequence they have little to fear, as their friends surround them, and keep off the crowd until the water is reached.

The whole of the proceedings are shown in the illustration on the preceding page.

In the distance is seen one of the culprits being taken to his fetish house, the basket of calabashes on his head, and the animals slung round his neck. Another is seen creeping into the house, near which the fetish man is standing, holding dead snakes in his hands, and horrible to look at by reason of the paint with which he has covered his face. In the foreground is another criminal rushing towards the water, just about to plunge into it and extinguish the flames that are still playing about his oil-saturated hair and have nearly burned off all his scanty clothing. The blazing hut is seen behind him, and around are the spectators, pelting and striking him, while his personal friends are checking them, and keeping the way clear towards the water.

We will now leave Whydah, and proceed towards the capital.

When a person of rank wishes to pay his respects to the king, the latter sends some of his officers, bearing, as an emblem of their rank, the shark-stick, *i.e.* a kind of tomahawk about two feet long, carved at the end into a rude semblance of the shark, another image of the same fish being made out of a silver dollar beaten flat and nailed to the end of the handle. One of the officers will probably have the lion-stick as his emblem of the trust reposed in him; but to unpractised eyes the lions carved on the stick would answer equally well for the shark, and both would do well as "crocodile" sticks, the shapes of the animals being purely conventional.

The mode of travelling is generally in hammocks, made of cotton cloth, but sometimes formed of silk: these latter are very gaudy affairs. The average size of a hammock is nine feet by five, and the ends are lashed to a pole some nine or ten feet in length. Upon the pole is fixed a slight framework, which supports an awning as a defence against the sun. The pole is carried not on the shoulders but the heads of the bearers, and, owing to their awkwardness and rough movements, an inexperienced traveller gets his head knocked against the pole with considerable violence. Two men carry it, but each hammock requires a set of seven men, some to act as relays, and others to help in getting the vehicle over a rough part of the road. Each man expects a glass of rum morning and evening, and, as he is able to make an unpopular master very uncomfortable, it is better to yield to the general custom, especially as rum is only threepence per pint.

Being now fairly in the midst of Dahome, let us see what is the meaning of the name.

Somewhere about A.D. 1620, an old king died and left three sons. The oldest took his father's kingdom, and the youngest, Dako by name (some writers call him Tacudona), went abroad to seek his fortune, and settled at a place not far from Agbome. By degrees Dako became more and more powerful, and was continually encroaching upon the country belonging to a neighbouring king called Danh, i.e. the Snake, or Rainbow. As the number of his followers increased, Dako pestered Danh for more and more land for them, until at last the king lost patience, and said to the pertinacious mendicant, "Soon thou wilt build in my belly." Dako thought that this idea was not a bad one, and when he had collected sufficient warriors, he attacked Danh, killed him, took possession of his kingdom, and built a new palace over his corpse, thus literally and deliberately fulfilling the prediction made in haste and anger by his conquered foe. In honour of his victory, the conqueror called the place Danh-ome, or Danh's-belly. The "n" in this word is a nasal sound unknown to English ears, and the word is best pronounced Dah-ome, as a dissyllable.

The great neighbouring kingdom of Allada was friendly with Dahome for nearly a hundred years, when they fell out, fought, and Dahome again proved victorious, so that Allada allowed itself to be incorporated with Dahome.

It was a little beyond Allada where Captain Burton first saw some of the celebrated Amazons, or female soldiers, who will be presently described, and here began the strange series of ceremonies, far too numerous to be separately described, which accompanied the progress of so important a visitor to the capital.

A mere slight outline will be given of them. At every village that was passed a dance was performed, which the travellers were expected to witness. All the dances being exactly alike, and consisting of writhings of the body and stamping with the feet, they soon became very monotonous, but had to be endured. At a place called Aquine a body of warriors rushed tumultuously into the cleared space of the village under its centre tree. They were about eighty in number, and were formed four deep. Headed by a sort of flag, and accompanied by the inevitable drum, they came on at full speed, singing at the top of their voices, and performing various agile antics. After circling round the tree, they all fell flat on the ground, beat up the dust with their hands, and flung it over their bodies. This is the royal salute of Western Africa, and was performed in honour of the king's canes of office, which he had sent by their bearers, accompanied by the great ornament of his court, an old liqueur case, covered with a white cloth, and borne on a boy's head.

From this case were produced bottles of water, wine, gin, and rum, of each of which the visitors were expected to drink three times, according to etiquette. After this ceremony had been completed, the escort, as these men proved to be, preceded the party to the capital, dancing and capering the whole way.

After several halts, the party arrived within sight of Kana, the country capital. "It is distinctly Dahome, and here the traveller expects to look upon the scenes of barbaric splendour of which all the world has read. And it has its own beauty; a French traveller has compared it with the loveliest villages of fair Provence, while to Mr. Duncan it suggested 'a vast pleasure-ground, not unlike some parts of the Great Park at Windsor.'

"After impervious but sombre forest, grass-barrens, and the dismal swamps of the path, the eye revels in these open plateaux; their seducing aspect is enhanced by scattered plantations of a leek-green studding the slopes, by a background of gigantic forest dwarfing the nearer palm-files, by homesteads buried in cultivation, and by calabashes and cotton-trees vast as the view, tempering the fiery summer to their subject growths, and in winter collecting the rains, which would otherwise bare the newly-buried seed. Nor is animal life wanting. The turkey-buzzard, the kite, and the kestrel soar in the upper heights; the brightest fly-catchers flit through the lower strata; the little grey squirrel nimbly climbs his lofty home; and a fine large spout-fowl rises from the plantations of maize and cassava."

As is usual with African names, the word Kana has been spelled in a different way by almost every traveller and every writer on the subject. Some call it Canna, or

Cannah, or Carnah, while others write the word as Calmina, evidently a corruption of Kana-mina, the "mina" being an addition. All the people between the Little Popo and Acua are called Mina. We shall, however, be quite safe, if throughout our account of Western Africa we accept the orthography of Captain Burton. Kana was seized about 1818 by King Gozo, who liked the place, and so made it his country capital—much as Brighton was to England in the days of the Regency. He drove out the fierce and warlike Oyos (pronounced Aw-yaws), and in celebration of so important a victory instituted an annual "custom," i.e. a human sacrifice, in which the victims are dressed like the conquered Oyos.

This is called Gozo's custom, and, although the details are not precisely known, its general tenor may be ascertained from the following facts. One traveller, who visited Kana in 1863, saw eleven platforms on poles about forty feet high. On each platform



"THE BELL COMES."

was the dead body of a man in an erect position, well dressed in the peasant style, and having in his hand a calabash containing oil, grain, or other product of the land. One of them was set up as if leading a sheep.

When Mr. Duncan visited Kana, or Cananina, as he calls it, he saw relics of this "custom." The walls of the place, which were of very great extent, were covered with human skulls placed about thirty feet apart, and upon a pole was the body of a man in an upright position, holding a basket on his head with both his arms. A little further on were the bodies of two other men, hung by their feet from a sort of gallows, about twenty feet high. They had been in that position about two months, and were hardly recognisable as human beings, and in fact must have presented as repulsive an appearance as the bodies hung in chains, or the heads on Temple Bar. Two more bodies were hung in a similar manner in the market-place, and Mr. Duncan was informed that they were criminals executed for intrigues with the king's wives.

At Kana is seen the first intimation of the presence of royalty. A small stream runs by it, and supplies Kana with water. At daybreak the women-slaves of the palace are released from the durance in which they are kept during the night, and sent off to fetch water for the palace. They are not fighting women or Amazons, as they are generally

called; but the slaves of the Amazons, each of these women having at least one female slave, and some as many as fifty.

The very fact, however, that they are servants of the Amazons, who are the servants of the king, confers on them a sort of dignity which they are not slow to assert. No man is allowed to look at them, much less to address them, and in consequence, when the women go to fetch water, they are headed by one of their number carrying a rude bell suspended to the neck. When the leader sees a man in the distance, she shakes the bell vigorously, and calls out, "Gan-ja," *i.e.* "the bell comes." As soon as the tinkle of the bell or the cry reach the ears of any men who happen to be on the road, they immediately run to the nearest footpath, of which a number are considerably made, leading into the woods, turn their backs, and wait patiently until the long file of women has passed.

They had need to escape as fast as they can, for if even one of the water-pots should happen to be broken, the nearest man would inevitably be accused of having frightened the woman who carried it, and would almost certainly be sold into slavery, together with his wife and family.



BELLS.

(From Colonel Lane Fox's Collection.)

As might be expected, the attendants at the palace are very proud of this privilege, and the uglier, the older, and the lower they are, the more perseveringly do they ring the bell and utter the dreaded shout, "Gan-ja." The oddest thing is that even the lowest of the male slaves employed in the palace assume the same privilege, and insist on occupying the road and driving all other travellers into the by-paths. "This," says Captain Burton, "is one of the greatest nuisances in Dahome. It continues through the day. In some parts, as around the palace, half a mile an hour would be full speed, and to make way for these animals of burthen, bought perhaps for a few pence, is, to say the least of it, by no means decorous."

The town of Kana has in itself few elements of beauty, however picturesque may be the surrounding scenery. It occupies about three miles of ground, and is composed primarily of the palace, and secondly of a number of houses scattered round it, set closely near the king's residence, and becoming more and more scattered in proportion to their distance from it. Captain Burton estimates the population at 4,000. The houses are built of a red sandy clay.

The palace walls, which are of great extent, are surrounded by a cheerful adornment in the shape of human skulls, which are placed on the top at intervals of thirty feet or so,

and striking, as it were, the key-note to the Dahoman character. In no place in the world is human life sacrificed with such prodigality and with such ostentation.

In most countries, after a criminal is executed, the body is allowed to be buried, or, at the most, is thrown to the beasts and the birds. In Dahome the skull of the victim is cleansed, and used as an ornament of some building, or as an appendage to the court and its precincts. Consequently, the one object which strikes the eye of a traveller is the human skull. The walls are edged with skulls, skulls are heaped in dishes before the king, skulls are stuck on the tops of poles, skulls are used as the heads of banner-staves, skulls are tied to dancers, and all the temples, or Ju-jū houses, are almost entirely built of human skulls. How they come to be in such profusion we shall see presently.

Horrible and repulsive as this system is, we ought to remember that even in our own country, in an age when art and literature were held in the highest estimation, the quartered bodies of persons executed for high treason were exposed on the gates of the principal cities, and that in the very heart of the capital their heads were exhibited up to a comparatively recent date. This practice, though not of so wholesale a character as the "custom" of Dahome, was yet identical with it in spirit.

As the Amazons, or female soldiers, have been mentioned, they will be here briefly described.

This celebrated force consists wholly of women, officers as well as privates. They hold a high position at court, and, as has already been mentioned, are of such importance that each Amazon possesses at least one slave. In their own country they are called by two names, Akbo-si, i.e. the King's wives, and Mi-no, i.e. our mothers; the first name being given to them on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, because they are not allowed to be the wives of any man, and the second being used as the conventional title of respect. The real wives of the king do not bear arms, and though he sometimes does take a fancy to one of his women-soldiers, she may not assume the position of a regular wife.

About one-third of the Amazons have been married, but the rest are unmarried maidens. Of course it is needful that such a body should observe strict celibacy, if their efficiency is to be maintained, and especial pains are taken to insure this object. In the first place, the strictest possible watch is kept over them, and, in the second, the power of superstition is invoked. At one of the palace gates, called significantly Agbo-dewe, i.e. the Discovery Gate, is placed a potent fetish, who watches over the conduct of the Amazons, and invariably discovers the soldier who breaks the most important of the military laws. The Amazons are so afraid of this fetish, that when one of them has transgressed she has been known to confess her fault, and to give up the name of her partner in crime, even with the knowledge that he will die a cruel death, and that she will be severely punished, and probably be executed by her fellow-soldiers. Besides, there is a powerful *esprit de corps* reigning among the Amazons, who are fond of boasting that they are not women, but men.

They certainly look as if they were, being, as a rule, more masculine in appearance than the male soldiers, tall, muscular, and possessed of unflinching courage and ruthless cruelty. Bloodthirsty and savage as are the Dahomans naturally, the Amazons take the lead in both qualities, seeming to avenge themselves, as it were, for the privations to which they are doomed. The spinster soldiers are women who have been selected by the king from the families of his subjects, he having the choice of them when they arrive at marriageable age; and the once married soldiers are women who have been detected in infidelity, and are enlisted instead of executed, or wives who are too vixenish towards their husbands, and so are appropriately drafted into the army, where their combative dispositions may find a more legitimate object.

In order to increase their bloodthirsty spirit, and inspire a feeling of emulation, those who have killed an enemy are allowed to exhibit a symbol of their prowess. They remove the scalp, and preserve it for exhibition on all reviews and grand occasions. They have also another decoration, equivalent to the Victoria Cross of this country, namely, a cowrie-shell fastened to the butt of the musket. After the battle is over, the victorious Amazon smears part of the rifle-butt with the blood of the fallen enemy, and just before

it dries spreads another layer. This is done until a thick, soft paste is formed, into which the cowrie is pressed. The musket is then laid in the sun, and when properly dry the shell is firmly glued to the weapon.

The possession of this trophy is eagerly coveted by the Amazons and, after a battle, those who have not slain an enemy with their own hand are half-maddened with envious



DAHOMAN AMAZONS

jealousy when they see their more successful sisters assuming the coveted decoration. One cowrie is allowed for each dead man, and some of the boldest and fiercest of the Amazons have their musket-hutts completely covered with cowries, arranged in circles, stars, and similar patterns.

The dress of the Amazons varies slightly according to the position which they occupy. The ordinary uniform is a blue and white tunic of native cloth, but made without sleeves, so as to allow full freedom to the arms. Under this is a sort of shirt or kilt, reaching

below the knees, and below the shirt the soldier wears a pair of short linen trousers. Round the waist is girded the ammunition-belt, which is made exactly on the same principle as the bandolier of the Middle Ages. It consists of some thirty hollow wooden cylinders sticking into a leathern belt, each cylinder containing one charge of powder.



POWDER FLASK.

When they load their guns, the Amazons merely pour the powder down the barrel, and ram the bullet after it, without taking the trouble to introduce wadding of any description, so that the force of the powder is much wasted, and the direction of the bullet very uncertain. Partly owing to the great windage caused by the careless loading and badly fitting balls, and partly on account of the inferiority of the powder, the charges are twice as large as would be required by a European soldier.

Captain Burton rightly stigmatizes the existence of such an army as an unmixed evil, and states that it is one of the causes which will one

day cause the kingdom of Dahomé to be obliterated from the earth. "The object of Dahomau wars and invasions has always been to lay waste and to destroy, not to aggrandize.

"As the history puts it, the rulers have ever followed the example of Agaja, the second founder of the kingdom; aiming at conquest and at striking terror, rather than at accretion and consolidation. Hence there has been a decrease of population with an increase of territory, which is to nations the surest road to ruin. In the present day the wars have dwindled to mere slave-hunts—a fact it is well to remember.

"The warrior troops, assumed to number 2,500, should represent 7,500 children; the waste of reproduction and the necessary casualties of 'service' in a region so depopulated are as detrimental to the body politic as a proportionate loss of blood would be to the body personal. Thus the land is desert, and the raw material of all industry, man, is everywhere wanting."

Fierce, cruel, relentless, deprived by severe laws of all social ties, the women-soldiers of Dahomé are the only real fighters, the men-soldiers being comparatively feeble and useless. They are badly and miscellaneously armed, some having trade guns, but the greater number being only furnished with bow and arrow, swords, or clubs. All, however, whether male or female, are provided with ropes wherewith to bind their prisoners, slave-hunts being in truth the real object of Dahoman warfare. From his profound knowledge of negro character, Captain Burton long ago prophesied that the kingdom of Dahomé was on the wane, and that "weakened by traditional policy, by a continual scene of blood, and by the arbitrary measures of her king, and demoralized by an export slave-trade, by close connexion with Europeans, and by frequent failure, this band of black Spartans is rapidly falling into decay."

He also foretold that the king's constant state of warfare with Abeokuta was a political mistake, and that the Egbas would eventually prove to be the conquerors. How true these remarks were has been proved by the events of the last few years. The king Gelele made his threatened attack on Abeokuta, and was hopelessly beaten. In spite of the reckless courage of the Amazons, who fought like so many mad dogs, and were assisted by three brass six-pounder field-guns, his attack failed, and his troops were driven off with the loss of a vast number of prisoners, while the killed were calculated at a thousand.

How recklessly these Amazons can fight is evident from their performances at a review. In this part of the country the simple fortifications are made of the acacia bushes, which are furnished with thorns of great length and sharpness, and are indeed formidable obstacles. At a review witnessed by Mr. Duncan, model forts were constructed of these thorns, which were heaped up into walls of some sixty or seventy feet in thickness and eight in height. It may well be imagined that to cross such ramparts as

these would be no easy task, even to European soldiers, whose feet are defended by thick-soled boots, and that to a barefooted soldiery they must be simply impregnable. Within the forts were built strong pens seven feet in height, inside of which were cooped up a vast number of male and female slaves belonging to the king.

The review began by the Amazons forming with shouldered arms about two hundred feet in front of the strong fort, and waiting for the word of command. As soon as it was given, they rushed forward, charged the solid fence as though thorns were powerless against their bare feet, dashed over it, tore down the fence, and returned to the king in triumph, leading with them the captured slaves, and exhibiting also the scalps of warriors



AMAZON REVIEW.

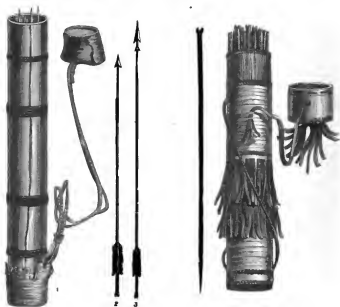
who had fallen in previous battles, but who were conventionally supposed to have perished on the present occasion. So rapid and fierce was the attack, that scarcely a minute had elapsed after the word of command was given and when the women were seen returning with their captives.

The organization of the Amazonian army is as peculiar as its existence. The regiment is divided into three battalions, namely, the centre and two wings. The centre, or Fanti battalion, is somewhat analogous to our Guards, and its members distinguished by wearing on the head a narrow white fillet, on which are sewn blue crocodiles. This ornament was granted to them by the king, because one of their number once killed a crocodile. As a mark of courtesy, the king generally confers on his distinguished visitors the honorary rank of commander of the Fanti battalion, but this rank does not entitle him even to order the corps out for a review.

The Grenadiers are represented by the Blunderbuss Company, who are selected for their size and strength, and are each followed by a slave carrying ammunition. Equal in rank to them are the sharpshooters, or "Sure-to-kill" Company, the Carbineers, and the Bayonet Company.

The women of most acknowledged courage are gathered into the Elephant Company, their special business being to hunt the elephant for the sake of its tusks, a task which they perform with great courage and success, often bringing down an elephant with a single volley from their imperfect weapons.

The youngest, best-looking, most active, and neatest dressed, are the archers. They are furnished with very poor weapons, usually bow and small arrows, and a small

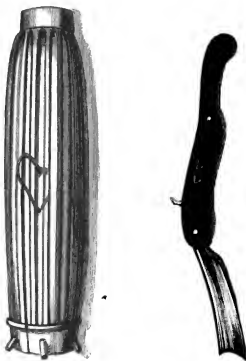


QUIVERS AND ARROWS.

knife. Indeed, they are more for show than for use, and wear by way of uniform a dress more scanty than that of the regular army, and are distinguished also by an ivory bracelet on the left arm, and a tattoo extending to the knee. They are specially trained in dancing, and when in the field, they are employed as messengers and in carrying off the dead and wounded. Their official title is *Go-hen-to*, i.e. the bearers of quivers.

The greater number of the Amazons are of course line-soldiers, and if they only had a little knowledge of military manœuvres, and could be taught to load properly, as well as to aim correctly, would treble their actual power. Their manœuvres, however, are compared by Captain Burton to those of a flock of sheep, and they have such little knowledge of concerted action that they would be scattered before a charge of the very worst troops in Europe.

Lastly come the Razor-women. This curious body is intended for striking terror into the enemy, the soldiers being armed with a large razor, that looks exactly as if it had been made for the clown in a pantomime. The blade is about two feet in length, and the handle of course somewhat larger, and, when opened, the blade is kept from shutting by a spring at the back. It is employed for decapitating criminals, but by way of a weapon it is almost worse than useless, and quite as likely to wound the person who holds it as it is him against whom it is directed. The razor was invented by a brother of the late King Gezo. By the side of the razor is shown one of the war-drums of the Amazons. Both of these instruments were taken from the slain warriors in the attack upon Abeokuta.



WAR-DRUM AND RAZOR.

CHAPTER LVI.

DAHOMÉ—*Continued.*

THE DUPLICATE KING—THE "CUSTOMS" OF DAHOMÉ—APPEARANCE OF KING GELELE—ETIQUETTE AT COURT—THE KING DRINKS—THE CALABASHES OF STATE—THE KING'S PROGRESS—THE ROYAL PROCESSION—THE FIRST DAT OF THE CUSTOMS—THE VICTIM-SHED AND ITS INMATES—THE ROYAL PAVILION—PRELIMINARY CEREMONIALS—THE SECOND DAY OF THE CUSTOMS—THE "ABLE-TO-DO-ANYTHING" CLOTH—THE THIRD DAT—SCRAMBLING FOR COWRIES, AND PROCESSION OF HUNCHBACKS—FETISHES—CONVERSATION WITH THE VICTIMS—THE FOURTH DAY AND ITS EVIL NIGHT—ESTIMATED NUMBER OF THE VICTIMS, AND MODE OF THEIR EXECUTION—OBJECT AND MEANING OF THE CUSTOMS—LETTER TO THE DEAD, AND THE POSTSCRIPT—EXECUTION AT AGBOMÉ—THE BLOOD-DRINKER.

BEFORE proceeding to the dread "customs" of Dahomé, we must give a brief notice of a remarkable point in the Daboman statecraft. Like Japan, Dahomé has two kings, but instead of being temporal and spiritual as in Japan, they are City king and Bush king, each having his throne, his state, his court, his army, his officers, and his customs. When Captain Burton visited Dahomé, the City king was Gelele, son of Gezo, and the Bush king was Addo-kpore.

The Bush king is set over all the farmers, and regulates tillage and commerce; while the City king rules the cities, makes war, and manages the slave trade. Consequently, the latter is so much brought into contact with the traders that the former is scarcely ever seen except by those who visit the country for the express purpose. He has a palace at a place about six miles from the capital, but the building was only made of poles and matting when Captain Burton visited it, and is not likely to be made of stronger materials, as it was not to be built of "swish" until Abeokuta was taken.

We will now proceed to describe, as briefly as is consistent with truth, the customs of both kings, our authorities being restricted to two, Mr. Duncan and Captain Burton, the latter having made many important corrections in the statements of the former and of other travellers. The present tense will therefore be used throughout the description.

Gelele is a fine-looking man, with a right royal aspect. He is more than six feet in height, thin, broad-shouldered, active, and powerful. His hair is nearly all shaven except two cockade-like tufts, which are used as attachments for beads and other trinkets of brass and silver. Contrary to the usual form, he has a firm and well-pronounced chin, and a tolerably good forehead, and, in spite of his cruel and bloodthirsty nature, has a very agreeable smile. He wears his nails very long, and is said, though the statement is very doubtful, that he keeps under his talon-like nails a powerful poison, which he slyly infuses in the drink of any of his Caboceers who happen to offend him. His face is much pitted with the small-pox, and he wears the mark of his race, namely three perpendicular scars on the forehead just above the nose. This is the last remnant of a very painful mode of tattooing, whereby the cheeks were literally carved, and the flaps of flesh turned up and forced to heal in that position.

He is not nearly so black as his father, his skin approaching the copper colour, and it is likely that his mother was either a slave-girl from the northern Makhi, or a mulatto girl from Whydah.

On ordinary occasions he dresses very simply, his body-cloth being of white stuff edged with green, and his short drawers of purple silk. He wears but few ornaments, the five or six iron bracelets which encircle his arms being used more as defensive armour than as jewellery.

Still, although dressed in a far simpler style than any of his Caboceers, he is very punctilious with regard to etiquette, and preserves the smallest traditions with a minute rigidity worthy of the court of Louis XIV. Although he may be sitting on a mere earthen bench, and smoking a clumsy and very plain pipe, all his court wait upon him with a reverence that seems to regard him as a demi-god rather than a man. Should the heat, from which he is sheltered as much as possible by the royal umbrella, produce a few drops on his brow, they are delicately wiped off by one of his wives with a fine cloth; if the tobacco prove rather too potent, a brass or even a gold spittoon is placed before the royal lips. If he sneezes, the whole assembled company burst into a shout of benedictions. The chief ceremony takes place when he drinks. As soon as he raises a cup to his lips, two of his wives spread a white cloth in front of him, while others hold a number of gaudy umbrellas so as to shield him from view. Every one who has a gun fires it, those who have bells beat them, rattles are shaken, and all the courtiers bend to the ground, clapping their hands. As to the commoners, they turn their backs if sitting, if standing they dance like bears, paddling with their hands as if they were paws, bawling "Poo-oo-oo" at the top of their voices.

If a message is sent from him, it is done in a most circuitous manner. He first delivers the message to the Dakro, a woman attached to the court. She takes it to the Meu, and the Meu passes it on to the Mingan, and the Mingan delivers it to the intended recipient. When the message is sent to the king, the order is reversed, and, as each officer has to speak to a superior, a salutation is used neatly graduated according to rank. When the message at last reaches the Dakro, she goes down on all-fours, and whispers the message into the royal ears. So tenacious of trifles is the native memory, that the message will travel through this circuitous route without the loss or transposition of a word.

When any one, no matter what may be his rank, presents himself before the king, he goes through a ceremony called "Itte dai," or lying on the ground. He prostrates himself flat on his face, and with his hands shovels the dust all over his person. He also kisses the ground, and takes care when he rises to have as much dust as possible on his huge hips. Face, hands, limbs, and clothes are equally covered with dust, the amount of reverence being measured by the amount of dust. No one approaches the king erect: he must crawl on all-fours, shuffle on his knees, or wriggle along like a snake.

Wherever Gelele holds his court, there are placed before him three large calabashes, each containing the skull of a powerful chief whom he had slain. The exhibition of these skulls is considered as mark of honour to their late owners, and not, as has been supposed, a sign of mockery or disgrace. One is bleached and polished like ivory, and is mounted on a small ship made of brass. The reason for this curious arrangement is, that when Gezo died, the chief sent a mocking message to Gelele, saying that the sea had dried up, and men had seen the end of Dahome. Gelele retaliated by invading his territory, killing him, and mounting his skull on a ship, as a token that there was plenty of water left to float the vessel.

The second skull is mounted with brass so as to form a drinking-cup. This was done because the owner had behaved treacherously to Gelele instead of assisting him. In token, therefore, that he ought to have "given water to a friend in affliction"—the metaphorical mode of expressing sympathy—Gelele and his courtiers now drink water out of his skull. The third was the skull of a chief who had partaken of this treachery, and his skull was accordingly mounted with brass fittings which represented the common country trap, in order to show that he had set a trap, and fallen into it himself. All these skulls were without the lower jaw, that being the most coveted ornament for umbrellas and sword-handles. Sad to say, with the usual negro disregard of inflicting pain, the

captor tears the jaw away while the victim is still alive, cutting through both cheeks with one hand and tearing away the jaw with the other.

The same minute and grotesque etiquette accompanies the king as he proceeds to Agbome, the real capital, to celebrate the So-Sin Custom, and it is impossible to read the accounts of the whole proceeding without being struck with the ingenuity by which the

negro has pressed into the service of barbarism everything European that he can lay his hands upon, while he has invariably managed thereby to make the rites ludicrous instead of imposing.

First came a long line of chiefs, distinguished by their flags and umbrellas, and after marching once round the large square, they crossed over and formed a line of umbrellas opposite the gateway. Then came the royal procession itself, headed by skirmishers and led by a man carrying one of the skull-topped banners. After these came some five hundred musketeers, and behind them marched two men carrying large leathern shields painted white, and decorated with a pattern in black. These are highly valued, as remnants of the old times when shields were used in warfare, and were accompanied by a guard of tall negroes, wearing brass helmets and black horse-tails.

Next came the Kafo, or emblem of royalty, namely an iron fetish-stick enclosed in a white linen case, topped with a white plume; and after the kafo came the king, riding under the shade of four white

umbrellas, and further sheltered from the sun by three parasols, yellow, purple, and blueish-red. These were waved over him so as to act as fans.

After the king was borne the great fetish-axe, followed by the "band," a noisy assemblage of performers on drums, rattles, trumpets, cymbals, and similar instruments. Lastly came a crowd of slaves laden with chairs, baskets of cowries, bottles, and similar articles, the rear being brought up by a pair of white and blue umbrellas and a tattered flag.

Six times the king was carried round the space, during two of the circuits being drawn in a nondescript wheeled vehicle, and on the third circuit being carried, carriage and all, on the shoulders of his attendants. The fourth and fifth circuits were made in a *Bath chair*, and the sixth in the same vehicle carried as before. The king then withdrew to the opposite side of the space, and the Amazons made their appearance, dashing into the space in three companies, followed by the Fanti companies already described. These young women showed their agility in dancing, and were followed by a calabash adorned with skulls and a number of flags, escorted by twelve Razor-women.



IVORY TRUMPETS

(From Colonel Lane Fox's collection.)

The right hand trumpet has a crucified figure on it.

By this time the king had transferred himself to a hammock of yellow silk, suspended from a black pole ornamented with silver sharks—this fish being a royal emblem—and tipped with brass at each end. Twelve women carried the hammock, and others shaded and fanned him as before. These preliminaries being completed, all retired to rest until the following day, which was to be the first of the So-Sin or Horse-tie Customs.



THE KING'S DANCE.

The first object that strikes the eye of the observer is a large shed about one hundred feet long, forty wide, and sixty high, having at one end a double-storeyed turret, and the whole being covered with a red cloth. At the time of which we are treating there sat in the shed twenty of the victims to be sacrificed. They were all seated on stools, and bound tightly to the posts by numerous cords. No unnecessary pain was inflicted: they were fed four times in the day, were loosened at night for sleeping, and were furnished with attendants who kept off the flies. They were dressed in a sort of San Benito costume, namely a white calico shirt, bound with red ribbon, and having a crimson patch on the left breast. On the head was a tall pointed white cap, with blue ribbon wound spirally round it. In spite of their impending fate, the victims did not seem to be unhappy, and looked upon the scene with manifest curiosity.

Next came the rite from which the ceremony takes its name. The chief of the horse came up with a number of followers, and took away all horses from their owners, and tied them to the shed, whence they could only be released by the payment of cowries.

Another shed was built especially for the king, and contained about the same number of victims. Presently Gelele came, and proceeded to his own shed, where he took his seat, close to the spot on which was pitched a little tent containing the relics of the old

king, and supposed to be temporarily inhabited by his ghost. After some unimportant ceremonies, Gelele made an address, stating that his ancestors had only built rough and rude So-Sin sheds, but that Gezo had improved upon them when "making customs" for his predecessor. But he, Gelele, meant to follow his father's example, and to do for his father what he hoped his son would do for him. This discourse was accompanied by himself on the drum, and after it was over, he displayed his activity in dancing, assisted by his favourite wives and a professional jester. Leaning on a staff decorated with a human skull, he then turned towards the little tent, and adored in impressive silence his father's ghost.

The next business was to distribute decorations and confer rank, the most prominent example being a man who was raised from a simple captain to be a Caboceer, the newly-created noble floundering on the ground, and covering himself and all his new clothes with dust as a mark of gratitude. More dancing and drumming then went on until the night closed in, and the first day was ended.

The second day exhibited nothing very worthy of notice except the rite which gives it the name of Cloth-changing Day. The king has a piece of patchwork, about six hundred yards long by ten wide, which is called the "Nun-ce-pae-to," i.e. the Able-to-do anything cloth. This is to be worn by the king as a robe as soon as he has taken Abeokuta, and, to all appearances, he will have to wait a very long time before he wears it. It is unrolled, and held up before the king, who walked along its whole length on both sides, amid the acclamations of his people, and then passed to his shed, where he was to go through the cloth-changing. This rite consisted in changing his dress several times before the people, and dancing in each new dress, finishing with a fetish war-dress, i.e. a short under-robe, and a dark blue cloth studded with charms and amulets, stained with blood, and edged with cowries.

The third day of the customs exhibited but little of interest, being merely the usual processions and speeches, repeated over and over again to a wearisome length. The most notable feature is the cowrie-scrambling. The king throws strings of cowries among the people, who fight for them on perfectly equal terms, the lowest peasant and the highest noble thinking themselves equally bound to join in the scramble.

Weapons are not used, but it is considered quite legitimate to gouge out eyes or bite out pieces of limbs, and there is scarcely a scramble that does not end in maiming for life, while on some occasions one or two luckless individuals are left dead on the ground. No notice is taken of them, as they are, by a pleasant fiction of law, supposed to have died an honourable death in defence of their king.

Lastly there came a procession of hunchbacks, who, as Captain Burton tells us, are common in Western Africa, and are assembled in troops of both sexes at the palace. The chief of them wielded a formidable whip, and, having arms of great length and muscular power, easily cut a way for his followers through the dense crowd. Seven potent fetishes were carried on the heads of the principal hunchbacks. They were very strong fetishes indeed, being in the habit of walking about after nightfall.

They are described as follows:—"The first was a blue dwarf, in a grey paque, with hat on head. The second, a blue woman with protuberant breast. The third, a red dwarf with white eyes, clad *cap-à-pie* in red and brown. The fourth was a small black mother and child in a blue loin-cloth, with a basket or calabash on the former's head. The fifth, ditto, but lesser. The sixth was a pigmy baboon-like thing, with a red face under a black skull-cap, a war-club in the right hand and a gun in the left; and the seventh much resembled the latter, but was lamp-black, with a white apron behind. They were carved much as the face cut on the top of a stick by the country bumpkins in England."

The king next paid a visit to the victims, and entered into conversation with some of them, and presented twenty "heads" of cowries to them. At Captain Burton's request that he would show mercy, he had nearly half of them untied, placed on their hands and knees in front of him, and then dismissed them.

The fourth day of the customs is traditionally called the Horse-losing Day, from a ceremony which has now been abolished, although the name is retained. More dances, more processions, and more boasts that Abeokuta should be destroyed, and that the

grave of Gelele's father should be well furnished with Egba skulls. The same little etishes already mentioned were again produced, and were followed by a curious *pas-de-seul* performed by a "So." The So is an imitation demon, "a bull-face mask of natural size, painted black, with glaring eyes and peep-holes. The horns were hung with red and white rag-strips, and beneath was a dress of hamboo fibre covering the feet, and fringed at the ends. It danced with head on one side, and swayed itself about to the great amusement of the people."

The whole of the proceedings were terminated by a long procession of slaves, bearing in their hands baskets of cowries. "It was the usual African inconsequence—100,000 to carry 20!"

The evening of the fourth day is the dreaded Evil Night, on which the king walks in solemn procession to the market-place, where the chief executioner with his own hand puts to death those victims who have been reserved. The precise nature of the proceedings is not known, as none are allowed to leave their houses except the king and his retinue; and any one who is foolish enough to break this law is carried off at once to swell the list of victims. It is said that the king speaks to the men, charging them with messages to his dead father, telling him that his memory is revered, and that a number of new attendants have been sent to him, and with his own hand striking the first blow, the others being slain by the regular executioner.

The bodies of the executed were now set upon a pole, or hung up by their heels, and exhibited to the populace, much as used to be done in England, when a thief was first executed, and then hung in chains.

The number of these victims has been much exaggerated. In the annual customs, the number appears to be between sixty and eighty. Some thirty of these victims are men, and suffer by the hand of the chief executioner or his assistants; but it is well known that many women are also put to death within the palace walls, the bloodthirsty Amazons being the executioners.

The mode of execution is rather remarkable. After the king has spoken to the victims, and dictated his messages, the executioners fall upon them and beat them to death with their official maces. These instruments are merely wooden clubs, armed on one side of the head with iron knobs. Some, however, say that the victims are beheaded; and it is very likely that both modes are employed.

As to the stories that have been so frequently told of the many thousand human victims that are annually slain, and of the canoe which is paddled by the king in a trench filled with human blood, they are nothing more than exaggerations invented by traders for the purpose of frightening Englishmen out of the country. Even in the Grand Customs which follow the decease of a king the number of victims is barely five hundred.

We may naturally ask ourselves what is the meaning of the customs, or So-Sin. This ceremony is the accepted mode of doing honour to the late king, by sending to him a number of attendants befitting his rank. Immediately after his burial, at the Grand Customs, some five hundred attendants, both male and female, are despatched to the dead king, and ever afterwards his train is swelled by those who are slain at the regular annual customs.

Besides the customs there is scarcely a day when executions of a similar character do not take place. Whatever the king does must be reported to his father by a man, who is first charged with the message and then killed. No matter how trivial the occasion may be—if a white man visits him, if he has a new drum made, or even if he moves from one house to another—a messenger is sent to tell his father. And if after the execution the king should find that he has forgotten something, away goes another messenger, like the postscript of a letter.

All this terrible destruction of human life, which is estimated by Burton as averaging five hundred per annum in ordinary years, and a thousand in the Grand Customs year, is bad enough, but not so bad as it has been painted. The victims are not simple subjects of the king selected for the sacrifice of bloodthirsty caprice, as has been generally supposed. They are either criminals or prisoners of war, and, instead of being executed

on the spot, are reserved for the customs, and are treated as well as is consistent with their safe custody.

Indeed, considering the object for which they are reserved, it would be bad policy for the Dahoman king to behave cruelly towards his victims. They are intended as messengers to his father, about whom they are ever afterwards supposed to wait, and it would be extremely impolitic in the present king to send to his father a messenger who was ill-disposed towards himself, and who might, therefore, garble his message, or deliver an evil report to the dead sovereign.

As a rule, the victims in question are quite cheerful and contented, and about as unlike our ideas of doomed men as can well be imagined.

In the first place, they are constitutionally indifferent to human life, their own lives with those of others being equally undervalued; and as they know that their lives are forfeit, they accept the position without useless murmurs. Nor is the mode of death so painful as seems at first sight to be the case, for the king, actuated by that feeling of pity which caused the Romans to stupefy with a soporific draught the senses of those who were condemned to the cross, mostly administers to the victims a bottle or so of rum about an hour before the execution, so that they are for the most part insensible when killed.

This humane alleviation of their sufferings is, however, restricted to those who die at the customs, and is not extended to those who perish by the hands of the executioner as messengers to the deceased king.

How these executions are conducted may be seen by the following account of a scene at Dahomé by Mr. Duncan:—

"The ceremonies of this day were nearly a repetition of those of yesterday, till the time arrived (an hour before sunset) when the four traitors were brought into the square for execution. They marched through the mob assembled round apparently as little concerned as the spectators, who seemed more cheerful than before the prisoners made their appearance, as if they were pleased with the prospect of a change of performance. The prisoners were marched close past me in slow time; consequently I had a good opportunity of minutely observing them, particularly as every person remained on his knees, with the exception of myself and the guard who accompanied the prisoners.

"They were all young men, of the middle size, and appeared to be of one family, or at least of the same tribe of Makees, who are much better-looking than the people of the coast. Each man was gagged with a short piece of wood, with a small strip of white cotton tied round each end of the stick, and passed round the pole. This was to prevent them from speaking. They were arranged in line, kneeling before the king.

"The head gang-gang man then gave four beats on the gong, as one—two, and one—two; the upper part of the gang-gang being smaller than the lower, and thus rendering the sounds different, similar to our public clocks in England when striking the quarters.

"After the four beats the gang-man addressed the culprits upon the enormity of their crime and the justice of their sentence. During this lengthened harangue the gang-gang was struck at short intervals, which gave a sort of awful solemnity to the scene. After this, the men were suddenly marched some distance back from his majesty, who on this occasion refused to witness the execution. The men were then ordered to kneel in line about nine feet apart, their hands being tied in front of the body, and the elbows held behind by two men, the body of the culprit bending forward.

"Poor old Mayho, who is an excellent man, was the proper executioner. He held the knife or bill-hook to me, but I again declined the honour; when the old man, at one blow on the back of the neck, divided the head from the body of the first culprit, with the exception of a small portion of the skin, which was separated by passing the knife underneath. Unfortunately the second man was dreadfully mangled, for the poor fellow at the moment the blow was struck having raised his head, the knife struck in a slanting direction, and only made a large wound; the next blow caught him on the back of the head, when the brain protruded. The poor fellow struggled violently. The third stroke caught him across the shoulders, inflicting a dreadful gash. The next caught him on the neck, which was twice repeated. The officer steadying the criminal now lost his hold

on account of the blood which rushed from the blood-vessels on all who were near. Poor old Mayho, now quite palsied, took hold of the head, and after twisting it several times round, separated it from the still convulsed and struggling trunk. During the latter part of this disgusting execution the head presented an awful spectacle, the distortion of the features, and the eyeballs completely upturned, giving it a borrid appearance.

"The next man, poor fellow, with his eyes partially shut and head drooping forward near to the ground, remained all this time in suspense; casting a partial glance on the head which was now close to him, and the trunk dragged close past him, the blood still rushing from it like a fountain. Mayho refused to make another attempt, and another man acted in his stead, and with one blow separated the spinal bones, but did not entirely separate the head from the body. This was finished in the same manner as the first. However, the fourth culprit was not so fortunate, his head not being separated till after three strokes. The body afterwards rolled over several times, when the blood spouted over my face and clothes.

"The most disgusting part of this abominable and disgusting execution was that of an ill-looking wretch, who, like the numerous vultures, stood with a small calahash in his hand, ready to catch the blood from each individual, which he greedily devoured before it had escaped one minute from the veins. The old wretch had the impudence to put some rum in the blood and ask me to drink: at that moment I could with good heart have sent a bullet through his head.

"Before execution the victim is furnished with a clean white cloth to tie round the loins. After decapitation the body is immediately dragged off by the heels to a large pit at a considerable distance from the town, and thrown therein, and is immediately devoured by wolves and vultures, which are here so ravenous that they will almost take your victuals from you."

Captain Burton says that he never saw this repulsive part of the sacrificial ceremony, and states that there is only one approach to cannibalism in Dahome. This is in connexion with the worship of the thunder-god, and is described on page 653.



STRING OF COWRIES
(From my collection.)

CHAPTER LVII.

DAHOMÉ—*Concluded.*

THE GRAND CUSTOMS OF DAHOMÉ—CELEBRATED ONCE IN A LIFETIME—"WE ARE HUNGRY"—THE BASKET SACRIFICE—GELELE'S TOWER—THE FIRE TELEGRAPH AND ITS DETAILS—LAST DAY OF THE CUSTOMS—THE TISEO ORATORS—A GENERAL SMASH—CONCLUSION OF THE CEREMONY—DAHOMAN MARRIAGES—THE RELIGION OF DAHOMÉ—POLYTHEISM, AND DIFFERENT RANKS OF THE DEITIES—WORSHIP OF THE THUNDER-ODD—CEREMONY OF HEAD-WORSHIP—THE PRIESTS OR FETISHERS—THE FEMALE FETISHERS—IDEAS OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD—INQUEST AFTER DEATH—BURIAL—THE DEATH OF A KING—THE WATER-SPRINKLING CUSTOM—CAPTAIN BURTON'S SUMMARY OF THE DAHOMAN CHARACTER.

WE now pass to the Grand Customs of Dahomé, which only take place once in a monarch's lifetime. This fearful ceremony, or rather series of ceremonies, is performed in honour of a deceased king, and the duty of carrying it out devolves upon his successor. Each king tries to outvie his predecessor by sacrificing a greater number of victims, or by inventing some new mode of performing the sacrifice. In consequence of this habit the mode of conducting the Grand Custom is so exceedingly variable that a full description would entail a narration of the custom as performed by each successive king.

It has already been stated that the victims are carefully saved for the purpose, Custom Day being the only general execution-time in the year; and in consequence, if a new king finds that he has not a sufficient number of victims to do honour to his father's memory, and at least to equal those whom his father sacrificed when he came to the throne, he must wait until the required number can be made up.

The usual method of doing so is to go to war with some tribe with whom there is a feud; and for this reason, among others, both Gezo and Gelele made a series of attacks, Abeokuta winning at first, but being afterwards beaten back, as has been narrated. It is chiefly for this reason that the Amazons are taught to rush so fiercely over the formidable thorn-walls by which the towns are fortified, and the prisoners whom they take are mostly handed over to the king to be kept in readiness for the next custom.

On the great day of the Grand Custom the king appears on a platform, decorated, according to Dahoman ideas in a most gorgeous manner, with cloths on which are rudely painted the figures of various animals. Around him are his favourite wives and his principal officers, each of the latter being distinguished by his great umbrella. Below is a vast and surging crowd of negroes of both sexes, wild with excitement and rum, and rending the air with their yells of welcome to their sovereign. In recognition of their loyalty, he flings among them "heads" of cowries, strings of beads, rolls of cloth, and similar valuables, for which they fight and scramble and tear each other like so many wild beasts—and indeed, for the time, they are as fierce and as ruthless as the most savage beasts that the earth holds.

After these specimens of the royal favour are distributed, the cries and yells begin to take shape, and gradually resolve themselves into praises of the king and appeals to

his bounty. "We are hungry, O King," they cry. "Feed us, O King, for we are hungry!" and this ominous demand is repeated with increasing fury, until the vast crowd haveashed themselves to a pitch of savage fury, which nothing but blood can appease. And blood they have in plenty. The victims are now brought forward, each being gagged in order to prevent him from crying out to the king for mercy, in which case he must be immediately released, and they are firmly secured by being lashed inside baskets, so that they can move neither head, hand, nor foot. At the sight of the victims the yells of the crowd below redouble, and the air is rent with the cry, "We are hungry! Feed us, O King."

Presently the deafening yells are hushed into a death-like silence, as the king rises, and with his own hand or foot pushes one of the victims off the platform into the midst of the crowd below. The helpless wretch falls into the outstretched arms of the eager crowd, the basket is rent to atoms by a hundred hands; and in a shorter time than it was taken to write this sentence the man has been torn limb from limb, while around each portion of the still quivering body a mass of infuriated negroes are fighting like so many starved dogs over a bone.

Gelele, following the habits of his ancestors, introduced an improvement on this practice, and, instead of merely pushing the victims off the platform, built a circular tower some thirty feet in length, decorated after the same grotesque manner as the platform, and ordered that the victims should be flung from the top of this tower. Should the kingdom of Dahome last long enough for Gelele to have a successor, some new variation will probably be introduced into the Grand Customs.

After Gelele had finished his gift-throwing, a strange procession wound its way to the tower—the procession of blood. First came a number of men, each carrying a pole, to the end of which was tied a living cock; and after them marched another string of men, each bearing on his head a living goat tied up in a flexible basket, so that the poor animals could not move a limb. Next came a bull, borne by a number of negroes; and lastly came the human victims, each tied in a basket, and carried, like the goats, horizontally on a man's head.

Three men now mounted to the top of the tower, and received the victims in succession, as they were handed up to them. Just below the tower an open space was left, in which was a block of wood, on the edge of a hole, attended by the executioners. The fowls were first flung from the top of the tower, still attached to the poles; and it seemed to be requisite that every creature which was then sacrificed should be tied in some extraordinary manner. As soon as they touched the ground, they were seized, dragged to the block, and their heads chopped off, so that the blood might be poured into the hole. The goats were thrown down after the fowls, the bull after the goats, and, lastly, the unfortunate men shared the same fate. The mingled blood of these victims was allowed to remain in the hole, which was left uncovered all night, the blood-stained block standing beside it.

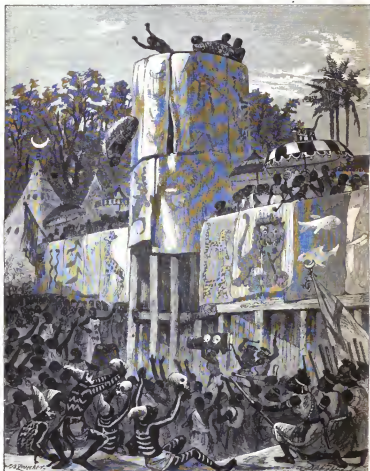
The illustration on the following page depicts the last feature of this terrible scene. On the right hand is the king, seated under his royal umbrella, surmounted with a leopard, the emblem of royalty, and around him are his wives and great men. In the centre rises the cloth-covered tower, from which a human victim has just been hurled, while another is being carried to his fate. Below is one of the executioners standing by the block, and clustering in front of the tower is the mob of infuriated savages.

Just below the king is seen the band, the most prominent instrument of which is the great drum carried on a man's head, and beaten by the drummer who stands behind him, and one of the king's banners is displayed behind the band, and guarded by a body of armed Amazons. In front are several of the fetish-men, their heads adorned with the conical cap, their bodies fantastically painted, and the inevitable skull in their hands. The house which is supposed to contain the spirit of the deceased king is seen on the left.

The last day of the customs is celebrated after a rather peculiar manner.

A line of soldiers armed with guns is stationed all the way from Agbome to Whydah. These soldiers are placed at some little distance from each other, and their duty is to

transmit a rolling fire all the way from the capital to the port and back again. This is a later invention, the former plan being to transmit a small present from hand to hand,



THE BASKET SACRIFICE

starting from Whydah and having its destination in the palace. Another line of musketeers extended from the Komasi house to a suburb about a mile distant.

The method of arranging them is very curious. At intervals of three hundred yards or so are built little huts of grass, each being the lodging-place of two soldiers. Though slightly built, there is some attempt at ornament about them, as each hut has a pent roof, a verandah supported by light poles, and the side walls decorated with a diamond pattern of bamboo and a fetish shrub, which is supposed to repel lightning. A tuft of grass ornaments each end of the gables, and those huts that are situated nearest the palace are always the most decorated.

In front of each hut the muskets belonging to the soldiers are fixed horizontally on forked sticks. They are ready loaded, and the two are employed lest one of them should miss fire. There are nearly nine hundred of these huts upon the line to Whydah, and it is calculated that the time occupied in the fire ought to be about half an hour.

When Captain Burton attended this ceremony in 1863, Gelele had not been confirmed at Allada, and in consequence was not, by royal etiquette, allowed to live in a house built of anything better than stakes and matting. Consequently, his officers were obliged to follow his example, as it would have been equivalent to treason had a subject presumed to live in a "swish" house when his monarch only dwelt in matting.

However, on this occasion at all events the king tried to atone by barbarous finery for the wretched material of his "palace." "The Agwajai gate led into an oblong court of matting, sprinkled with thick-leaved little fig-trees of vivid green, and divided into two by the usual line of bamboos. At the bottom of the southern half was the royal pavilion, somewhat like a Shakmiyana in Bengal, with an open wing on each side.

"The sloping roof of the central part, intended for the king, was of gold and lake damask, under two broad strips of red and green satin; the wings, all silk and velvet, were horizontally banded with red, white-edged green, purple and yellow, red and green in succession, from the top, and, where the tongue-shaped lappets started, with chrome yellow. The hangings, playing loosely in the wind, were remarkable chiefly for grotesque figures of men and beasts cut out of coloured cloth and sewn to the lining."

Several little tables were placed near the inner entrances, each being sheltered by a huge umbrella, three decorated with figures and four white. These were for the women, who were dressed in their gayest apparel, magnificent in mantles of red, pink, and flowered silks and satins. Opposite to the king were five ragged white umbrellas, sheltering eleven small tables, and behind the tables was a small crowd of officials and captains, dressed in costumes somewhat similar to those of the women.

On the right of the throne was the court-fool, a very important man indeed, his eyes surrounded with rings of white chalk, and his shoulders covered with an old red velvet mantle. Although not of sufficient rank to be permitted the use of an umbrella, he was sheltered from the sun by a piece of matting raised on poles. A model of a canoe was placed near him.

Just at the entrances eight muskets were tied horizontally, each supported on two forked sticks, as has already been described, and behind each musket stood the Amazon to whom it belonged.

After making his guests wait for at least two hours,—such a delay being agreeable to royal etiquette,—the king condescended to appear. This time he had arrayed himself after a very gorgeous and rather heterogeneous fashion. He wore a yellow silk tunic, covered with little scarlet flowers, a great black felt Spanish hat, or sombrero, richly embroidered with gold braid, and a broad belt of gold and pearls (probably imitation) passed over his left shoulder to his right side. Suspended to his neck was a large crucifix, and in his left hand he carried an hour-glass. An old rickety table with metal legs, and covered with red velvet, was placed before him, and upon it were laid a silver mug, a rosary, sundry pieces of plate, and some silver armlets. On taking his seat, he put the silver mug to its proper use, by drinking with all his guests, his own face being, according to custom, hidden by a linen cloth while he drank.

After the usual complimentary addresses had been made, a woman rose at 1 P.M. and gave the word of command—"A-de-o." This is a corruption of Adios, or farewell. At this word two of the muskets in front of the king were discharged, and the firing was taken up by the Jegbe line. In three minutes the firing ran round Jegbe and returned

to the palace. At 2 P.M. another "A-de-o" started the line of firing to Whydah, the time of its return having been exactly calculated and marked by a rude device of laying cowries on the ground, and weaving a cloth in a loom, the number of threads that are laid being supposed to indicate a certain duration of time.

As soon as the firing began, two officials marched up to the king and began an oration, which they were bound to maintain until the firing had returned. Amid the horrible noise of five heralds proclaiming the royal titles and a jester springing his rattle, they began their speech, but were sadly discomfited by a wrong calculation or a mismanagement of the firing. Instead of occupying only half an hour, it was not finished for an hour and a half, and the poor orators were so overcome with heat and the fine dust which hovered about, that towards the end of the time they were nearly choked, and could hardly get out short sentences, at long intervals, from their parched throats. "There will be stick for this," remarks Captain Burton.

Stick, indeed, is administered very freely, and the highest with the lowest are equally liable to it. On one occasion some of the chief officers of the court did not make their appearance exactly at the proper time. The king considered that this conduct was an usurpation of the royal prerogative of making every one else wait, whereas they had absolutely made him wait for them. So, as soon as they appeared, he ordered the Amazons to take their bamboos and beat them out of the court, a command which they executed with dispatch and vigour. The beaten ministers did not, however, seem to resent their treatment, but sat cowering at the gate in abject submission.

After occupying several days in this feasting and speech-making and boasting, the king at last proceeded to the last act of the customs. Having resumed his place at the velvet-covered table, he filled his glass with rum, and drank with his visitors to the health of his father's ghost, who, by the way, had been seen bathing in the sea, and had received two slaves, sacrificed in order to tell him that his son was pleased at his visit. After a few unimportant ceremonies, he poured a little rum on the ground, and, dashing his glass to pieces on the table, rose and left the tent. His attendants followed his example, and smashed everything to pieces, even including the tables; this act probably accounting for the very mean and rickety condition of the royal furniture.

With this general smash the customs terminated, much to the relief of the visitors.

Marriages among the Dahomans are an odd compound of simplicity and complexity. The bridegroom commences his suit by sending a couple of friends to the father of the intended bride, and furnishes them with a doubly potent argument in the shape of two bottles of rum. Should the father approve of the proposition, he graciously drinks the rum, and sends back the empty bottles—a token that he accepts the proposal, and as a delicate hint that he would like some more rum. The happy man takes the hint, fills the bottles, sends them to the father, together with a present for the young lady; and then nothing more is required except to name the amount of payment which is demanded for the girl. Cloth is the chief article of barter, and a man is sometimes occupied for two or three years in procuring a sufficient quantity.

At last the day—always a Sunday—is settled, and more bottles of rum are sent by the bridegroom's messengers, who bring the bride in triumph to her future home, followed by all her family and friends. Then comes a general feast, at which it is a point of honour to consume as much as possible, and it is not until after midnight that the bride is definitely handed over to her husband. The feast being over, the bridegroom retires into his house and scats himself. Several fetish-women lead in the bride by her wrists, and present her in solemn form, telling them both to behave well to each other, but recommending him to flog her well if she displeases him. Another two or three hours of drinking then follows, and about 3 or 4 A.M. the fetish-women retire, and the actual marriage is supposed to be completed.

Next morning the husband sends more rum and some heads of cowries to the girl's parents as a token that he is satisfied, and after a week the bride returns to her father's house, where she remains for a day or two, cooking, however, her husband's food and sending it to him. On the day when she returns home another feast is held, and then she

subsides into the semi-servile state which is the normal condition of a wife throughout the greater part of savage Africa.

We now come to the religion of Dahome, which, as may be imagined from the previous narrative, is of a very low character, and has been curtly summarized by Captain Burton in the following sentence :—" Africans, as a rule, worship everything except the Creator." As the contact of the Dahomans with the white men and with the Moslems has probably engrafted foreign ideas in the native mind, it is not very easy to find out the exact nature of their religion, but the following account is a short abstract of the result of Captain Burton's investigations.

He states that the reason why the natives do not worship the Creator is that, although they acknowledge the fact of a supreme Deity, they think that He is too great and high to trouble Himself about the affairs of mankind, and in consequence they do not trouble themselves by paying a worship which they think would be fruitless. Their devotion, such as it is, expends itself therefore upon a host of minor deities, all connected with some material object.

First we have the principal deities, who are ranked in distinct classes. The most important is the Snake-god, who has a thousand snake wives, and is represented by the *Danhgwe*, which has already been mentioned. Next in order come the Tree-gods, of which the silk-cotton (*Bombax*) is the most powerful, and has the same number of wives as the *Danhgwe*. It has, however, a rival in the *Ordcal*, or poison-tree.

The last of these groups is the sea. This deity is represented at Whydah by a very great priest, who ranks as a king, and has five hundred wives in virtue of his representative office. At stated times he visits the shore to pay his respects, and to throw into the waves his offerings of beads, cowries, cloth, and other valuables. Now and then the king sends a human sacrifice from the capital. He creates the victim a Caboceer, gives him the state uniform and umbrella of his short-lived rank, puts him in a gorgeous hammock, and sends him in great pomp and state to Whydah. As soon as he arrives there, the priest takes him out of his hammock and transfers him to a canoe, takes him out to sea, and flings him into the water, where he is instantly devoured by the expectant sharks.

Lately a fourth group of superior deities has been added, under the name of the Thunder-gods. In connexion with the worship of this deity is found the only approach to cannibalism which is known to exist in Dahome. When a man has been killed by lightning, burial is not lawful, and the body is therefore laid on a platform and cut up by the women, who hold the pieces of flesh in their mouths, and pretend to eat them, calling out to the passengers, "We sell you meat, fine meat; come and buy!"

After these groups of superior deities come a host of inferior gods, too numerous to mention. One, however, is too curious to be omitted. It is a man's own head, which is considered a very powerful fetish in Dahome, and is worshipped as follow :—

"The head-worshipper, after providing a fowl, kola-nuts, rum, and water, bathes, dresses in pure white baft, and seats himself on a clean mat. An old woman, with her *medius* finger dipped in water, touches successively his forehead, poll, nape, and mid-breast, sometimes all his joints. She then breaks a kola into its natural divisions, throws them down like dice, chooses a lucky piece, which she causes a bystander to chew, and with his saliva retouches the parts before alluded to.

"The fowl is then killed by pulling its body, the neck being held between the big and first toe; the same *attouchements* are performed with its head, and finally with the boiled and shredded flesh before it is eaten. Meanwhile rum and water are drunk by those present."

The fetishers, or priests, are chosen by reason of a sort of ecstatic fit which comes upon them, and which causes them at last to fall to the ground insensible. One of the older priests awaits the return of the senses, and then tells the neophyte what particular fetish has come to him. He is then taken away to the college, or fetish part of the town, where he learns the mysteries of his calling, and is instructed for several years in the esoteric language of the priests, a language which none but themselves can understand. If at the end of the noviciate he should return to his former home, he speaks nothing but

this sacred language, and makes it a point of honour never to utter a sentence that any member of the household can understand.

When a man is once admitted into the ranks of the fetishes, his subsistence is provided for, whether he be one of the "regulars," who have no other calling, and who live entirely upon the presents which they obtain from those who consult them, or whether he retains some secular trade, and only acts the fetisher when the fit happens to come on him. They distinguish themselves by various modes of dress, such as shaving



HEAD WORSHIP.

half the beard, carrying a cow-tail flapper, or wearing the favourite mark of a fetisher, namely a belt of cowries strung back to back, each pair being separated by a single black seed.

The fetish-women greatly outnumber the men, nearly one-fourth belonging to this order. They are often destined to this career before their birth, and are married to the fetish before they see the light of day. They also take human spouses, but, from all accounts, the life of the husband is not the most agreeable in the world. The women spend their mornings in going about begging for cowries. In the afternoon she goes with her sisters into the fetish-house, and puts on her official dress. The whole party then sally out to the squares, where they drum and sing and dance and lash themselves into fits of raving ecstasy. This lasts for a few hours, when the women assume their ordinary costumes and go home.

It is illegal for any fetisher to be assaulted while the fetish is on them, and so the women always manage to shield themselves from their husband's wrath by a fetish fit whenever he becomes angry, and threatens the stick.

As to the position of the human soul in the next world, they believe that a man takes among the spirits the same rank which he held among men; so that a man who dies as a king is a king to all eternity, while he who is a slave when he dies can never be a free man, but must be the property of some wealthy ghost or other.

Visiting the world of spirits is one of the chief employments of the fetish-men, who are always ready to make the journey when paid for their trouble. They are often called upon to do so, for a Dahoman who feels unwell or out of spirits always fancies that his deceased relatives are calling for him to join them, a request which he feels most unwilling

grant. So he goes to his favourite fetisher, and gives him a dollar to descend into the spirit world and present his excuses to his friends. The fetisher covers himself with his loth, lies down, and falls into a trance, and, when he recovers, he gives a detailed account of the conversation which has taken place between himself and the friends of his client.

Sometimes he brings back a rare bead or some other object, as proof that he has really delivered the message and received the answer. The whole proceeding is strangely like the ceremonies performed by the medicine-men or Angekoks among the Esquimaux.

It is a strange thing that, in a country where human life is sacrificed so freely, a sort of inquest takes place after every death. The reason for this custom is rather curious. The king reserves to himself the right of life and death over his subjects, and any one who kills another is supposed to have usurped the royal privilege.

As soon as death takes place, notice is sent to the proper officers, called Gevi, who come and inspect the body, receiving as a fee a head and a half of cowries. When they have certified that the death was natural, the relatives begin their mourning, during which they may not eat nor wash, but may sing as much as they please, and drink as much rum as they can get. A coffin is prepared, its size varying according to the rank of the deceased person; the corpse is clothed in its best attire, decorated with ornaments, and a change of raiment is laid in the coffin, to be worn when the deceased fairly reaches the land of spirits. The very poor are unable to obtain a coffin, and a wrapper of matting is deemed sufficient in such cases.

The grave is dug in rather a peculiar manner, a cavern being excavated on one side, the coffin being first lowered and then pushed sideways into the cave, so that the earth immediately above is undisturbed. After the grave is filled in, the earth is smoothed with water. Over the grave of a man in good circumstances is placed a vessel-shaped iron, into which is poured water or blood by way of drink for the deceased. Formerly a rich man used to have slaves buried with him, but of late years only the two chiefs of the king are allowed to sacrifice one slave at death, they being supposed not to need as many attendants in the next world as if they had been kings of Dahome in this.

As soon as the king dies, his wives and all the women of the palace begin to smash everything that comes in their way, exactly as has been related of the concluding scene of the customs; and, when they have broken all the furniture of the palace, they begin to turn their destructive fury upon each other, so that at the death of Agagoro it was calculated that several hundred women lost their lives within the palace walls merely in this fight, those sacrificed at the succeeding customs being additional victims. This blood-thirsty rage soon extends beyond the precincts of the palace, and Captain Burton, who has done so much in contradicting the exaggerated tales of Dahoman bloodshed that have been so widely circulated, acknowledges that, however well a white stranger may be received at Agbome, his life would be in very great danger were he to remain in the capital when the king died.

Even with the termination of the customs the scenes of blood do not end. Next comes the "water-sprinkling," i.e. the graves of the kings must be sprinkled with "water," the Dahoman euphemism for blood. Of late years the number of human victims sacrificed at each grave has been reduced to two, the requisite amount of "water" being supplied by various animals.

Before each tomb the king kneels on all fours, accompanied by his chiefs and captains, while a female priest, who must be of royal descent, makes a long oration to the spirit of the deceased ruler, asking him to aid his descendant and to give success and prosperity to his kingdom. Libations of rum and pure water are then poured upon each grave, followed by the sacrificial "water," which flows from the throats of the men, oxen, goats, pigeons, and other victims. Kola nuts and other kinds of food are also brought as offerings.

The flesh of the animals is then cooked, together with the vegetables, and a feast is held, the stool of the deceased ruler being placed on the table as an emblem of his presence. All the Dahoman kings are buried within the walls of the palace, a house being erected over each grave. During the water-sprinkling, or "Sin-quain," custom, the king goes to each house separately, and sleeps in it for five or six nights, so as to put himself in communion with the spirits of his predecessors.

The reader will remember that the kings who formerly ruled Dahomé are still supposed to hold royal rank in the spiritual world, and the prevalence of the customs shows that this belief in the dead is strong enough to exercise a powerful influence over the living.

We have now very briefly glanced at the Dahoman in peace, in war, in religion, in death, and in burial. He is not a pleasant subject, and, though the space which has been given to him is much too small to afford more than an outline of his history, it would have been more restricted but for the fact that the Dahoman is an excellent type of the true negro of Western Africa, and that a somewhat detailed description of him will enable us to dismiss many other negro tribes with but a passing notice.

Moreover, as the kingdom of Dahomé is fast failing, and all the strange manners and customs which have been mentioned will soon be only matters of history, it was necessary to allot rather more space to them than would otherwise have been the case. The general character of the Dahoman has been so tersely summed up by Captain Burton, that our history of Dahomé cannot have a better termination than the words of so competent an authority.

"The modern Dahomans are a mongrel breed and a bad. They are Cretan liars, *croûtes* at learning, cowardly, and therefore cruel and bloodthirsty; gamblers, and consequently cheaters; brutal, noisy, boisterous, unvenerative, and disobedient; 'dipsas-bitten' things, who deem it duty to the gods to be drunk; a flatulent, self-conceited herd of barbarians, who endeavour to humiliate all those with whom they deal; in fact, a slave-race,—vermin with a soul apiece.

"They pride themselves in not being, like the Popos, addicted to the 'dark and dirty crime of poison,' the fact being that they have been enabled hitherto to carry everything with a high and violent hand. They are dark in skin, the browns being of xanthous temperament, middle-sized, slight, and very lightly made. My Krumen looked like Englishmen among them. In all wrestling bouts my Krumen threw the hammock-bearers on their heads, and on one occasion, during a kind of party fight, six of them, with fists and sticks, held their own against twenty Dahomans.

"They are agile, good walkers, and hard dancers, but carry little weight. Their dress is a *godo*, or T bandage, a *nun-pwe* (under-cloth) or a *Tfon chokoto* (pair of short drawers), and an *owu-chyon*, or body-cloth, twelve feet long by four to six broad, worn like the Roman toga, from which it may possibly be derived.

"The women are of the *Hastini*, or elephant order, dark, plain, masculine, and comparatively speaking of large, strong, and square build. They are the reapers as well as the sowers of the field, and can claim the merit of laboriousness, if of no other quality.

"They tattoo the skin, especially the stomach, with *alto-relievo* patterns; their dress is a zone of beads, supporting a bandage beneath the *do-oo*, or scanty loin-cloth, which suffices for the poor and young girls. The upper classes add an *aga-oo*, or over-cloth, two fathoms long, passed under the arms, and covering all from the bosom to the ancles. Neither sex wear either shirt, shoes, or stockings."



DAGOER—WEST AFRICA.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE EGBAS.

THE EGBA TRIBE—A BLACK BISHOP—GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE EGBAS—THEIR TRIBAL MARK—TATTOO OF THE BRRECHKE, OR GENTLEMEN—SIGNIFICATION OF ORNAMENTS—MODE OF SALUTATION—EGBA ARCHITECTURE—SUBDIVISION OF LABOUR—ABEOKUTA AND ITS FORTIFICATIONS—FEUD BETWEEN THE EGBAS AND DAHOMANS—VARIOUS SKIRMISHES AND BATTLES, AND THEIR RESULTS—THE GRAND ATTACK ON ABEOKUTA—EXPULSE OF THE DAHOMAN ARMY—RELIGION OF THE EGBAS—THE SYSTEM OF OGBONI—MISCELLANEOUS SUPERSTITIONS AND SUPPLEMENTARY DEITIES—EGAGUN AND HIS SOCIAL DUTIES—THE ALAKÉ, OR KING OF THE EGBAS—A RECEPTION AT COURT—APPEARANCE OF THE ATTENDANTS.

We are naturally led from Dahome to its powerful and now victorious enemy, the EGBA tribe, which has perhaps earned the right to be considered as a nation, and which certainly is as much right to that title as Dahome.

The Egbas have a peculiar claim on our notice. Some years ago an Egba boy named jai (*i.e.* "struggling for life") embraced Christianity, and, after many years of trial, was ordained deacon and priest in the Church of England. Owing to his constitution he was able to work where a white man would have been prostrated by disease; and, owing to his origin, he was enabled to understand the peculiar temperament of his fellow negroes better than any white man could hope to do. His influence gradually extended, and he was held in the highest esteem throughout the whole of Western Africa. His widely felt influence was at last so thoroughly recognised, that he was consecrated to the episcopal office, and now the negro boy Ajai is known as the Right Rev. Samuel Crowther, D.D., Lord Bishop of the Niger.

As far as their persons go, the Egbas are a fine race of men, varying much in colour according to the particular locality which they inhabit. The skin, for example, of the 'gba-do, or lower Egba, is of a coppery black, and that of the chiefs is, as a rule, fairer than that of the common people. Even the hair of the chiefs is lighter than that of the common folk, and sometimes assumes a decidedly sandy hue.

The men, while in the prime of life, are remarkable for the extreme beauty of their forms and the extreme ugliness of their features; and, as is mostly the case in uncivilized Africa, the woman is in symmetry of form far inferior to the man, and where one well-developed female form is seen, twenty can be found of the opposite sex.

Whatever may be the exact colour of the Egba's skin, it exhales that peculiar and indescribable odour which is so characteristic of the negro races; and, although the slight clothing, the open-air life, and the use of a rude palm-oil soap prevent that odour from attaining its full power, it is still perceptible. The lips are of course large and sausage-shaped, the lower part of the face protrudes, and the chin recedes to an almost incredible extent, so as nearly to deprive the countenance of its human character. The hair is short, crisp, and often grows in the little peppercorn tufts that have been already mentioned in connexion with the Bosjesman race of Southern Africa. The men dress this

scanty crop of hair in a thousand ways, shaving it into patterns, and thus producing an effect which, to the eye of a European, is irresistibly ludicrous. The women contrive to tease it out to its full length, and to divide it into ridges running over the crown from the forehead to the nape of the neck, preserving a clean parting between each ridge, and so making the head look as if it were covered with the half of a black melon. The skin of the common people is hard and coarse,—so coarse indeed that Captain Burton compares it to shagreen, and says that the hand of a slave looks very like the foot of a fowl.

As to the dress of the Egbas, when uncontaminated by pseudo-civilization, it is as easily described as procured. A poor man has nothing but a piece of cloth round his waist, while a man in rather better circumstances adds a pair of short linen drawers or trousers, called "shogo," and a wealthy man wears both the loin-cloth and the drawers, and adds to them a large cloth wrapped gracefully round the waist, and another draped over the shoulders like a Scotch plaid. The cloths are dyed by the makers, blue being the usual colour, and the patterns being mostly stripes of lesser or greater width.

Women have generally a short and scanty petticoat, above which is a large cloth that extends from the waist downwards, and a third which is wrapped shawl-wise over the shoulders. The men and women who care much about dress dye their hands and feet with red wood. Formerly, this warlike race used to arm themselves with bows and arrows, which have now been almost wholly superseded by the "trade gun." Even now every man carries in his hand the universal club or knob-kerry, which, among the Egbas, has been modified into a simple hooked stick bound with iron wire in order to increase the strength and weight, and studded with heavy nails along the convex side. Weapons of a similar nature are used at Dahome for clubbing criminals to death.

According to savage ideas of beauty, these people tattoo themselves profusely, covering their bodies with marks which must at some time have been produced by very painful operations, and which, from their diversity, serve to perplex observers who have not had time to examine them minutely, and to classify their wearer.

According to Captain Burton, "the skin-patterns were of every variety, from the diminutive prick to the great gash and the large boil-like lumps. They affected various figures—tortoises, alligators, and the favourite lizard; stars, concentric circles, lozenges, right lines, welts, gouts of gore, marble or button-like knobs of flesh, and elevated scars, resembling scalds, which are opened for the introduction of fetish medicines, and to expel evil influences.

"In this country every tribe, sub-tribe, and even family, has its blazon, whose infinite diversifications may be compared with the lines and ordinaries of European heraldry,—a volume would not suffice to explain all the marks in detail. Ogubonna's family, for instance, have three small squares of blue tattoo on each cheek, combined with the three Egha cuts.

"The chief are as follows:—The distinguishing mark of the Egbas is a gridiron of three cuts, or a multiplication of three, on each cheek. Free-born women have one, two, or three raised lines, thread-like scars, from the wrist up the back of the arm, and down the dorsal region, like long necklaces. They call these 'Entice my husband.'

"The Yorubas draw perpendicular marks from the temples to the level of the chin, with slight lateral incisions, hardly perceptible, because allowed soon to heal. The Efons of Kakanda wear a blue patch, sometimes highly developed, from the cheek-bones to the ear. The Takpas of Nupe make one long cut from the upper part of the nostril, sweeping towards the ear. At Ijasha, a country lying east of Yoruba proper, the tattoo is a long parallelogram of seven perpendicular and five transverse lines.

The most curious tattoo is that of the Breechee (i.e. gentleman), or eldest son and heir. He is not allowed to perform any menial office, and inherits at his father's death all the slaves, wives, and children. Before the Breechee attains full age, a slit is made across his forehead, and the skin is drawn down and laid across the brow, so as to form a ridge of hard, knotty flesh from one temple to the other. The severity of the operation is so great that even the negro often dies from its effects; but when he survives he is greatly admired, the unsightly ridge being looked upon as a proof of his future wealth and his actual strength of constitution.

So minutely does the African mind descend to detail, that even the ornaments which are worn have some signification well understood by those who use them. Rings of metal are worn on the legs, ankles, arms, wrists, fingers, and toes; and round the neck and on the body are hung strings of beads and other ornaments. Each of these ornaments signifies a particular deity whom the wearer thinks fit to worship; and although the number of these deities is very great, the invention of the negro has been found equal to representing them by the various ornaments which he wears.

The same minuteness is found in the ordinary affairs of life; and, even in the regular mode of uttering a salutation, the natives have invented a vast number of minutiae. For example, it would be the depth of bad manners to salute a man who was sitting as if he were standing, or the latter as if he were walking, or a third as if he were returning from walking. Should he be at work, another form of address is needed, and another if he



SALUTATION.

should be tired. No less than fifteen forms of personal salutation are mentioned by Captain Burton, so that the reader may easily imagine how troublesome the language is to a stranger.

Then the forms of salutation differ as much as the words. If an inferior meet a superior, a son meet his mother, a younger brother meet his elder, and so on, an elaborate ceremony is performed. Any burden that may be carried is placed on the ground, and the bearer proceeds first to kneel on all fours, then to prostrate himself flat in the dust, rubbing the earth with the forehead and each cheek alternately. The next process is to kiss the ground, and this ceremony is followed by passing each hand down the opposite arm. The dust is again kissed, and not until then does the saluter resume his feet.

This salutation is only performed once daily to the same person; but as almost every one knows every one whom he meets, and as one of them must of necessity be inferior to the other, a vast amount of salutation has to be got through in the course of a day. Putting together the time occupied in the various salutations, it is calculated that at least an hour is consumed by every Egba in rendering or receiving homage. Sometimes two men meet who are nearly equal, and in such a case both squat on the ground, and snap their fingers according to the etiquette of Western Africa.

The architecture of the Egba tribe is mostly confined to "swish" walls and thatched roofs. A vast number of workers—or rather idlers—are engaged on a single house, and the subdivision of labour is carried out to an extreme extent. Indeed, as Captain Burton quaintly remarks, the Eghas divide the labour so much that the remainder is imperceptible.

Some of them dig the clay, forming thereby deep pits, which they never trouble themselves to fill up again, and which become the receptacles of all sorts of filth and offal. Water, in this wet country, soon pours into them, and sometimes the corpse of a slave or child is flung into the nearest pit, to save the trouble of burial. It may easily be imagined that such pits contribute their part to the fever-breeding atmosphere of the country.

Another gang is employed in kneading clay and rolling it into balls; and a third carries it, one ball at a time, to the builders. Another gang puts the clay balls into the squared shape needful for architectural purposes; and a fifth hands the shaped clay to the sixth, who are the actual architects. Yet a seventh gang occupies itself in preparing palm-leaves and thatch; and those who fasten them on the roof form an eighth gang. Besides these, there is the chief architect, who by his plumb-line and level rectifies and smooths the walls with a broad wooden shovel, and sees that they are perfectly upright.

Three successive layers of clay or "swish" are needed, each layer being allowed to dry for a few days before the next is added. The builders always manage, if possible, to complete their walls by November, so that the dry harmattan of December may consolidate the soft clay, and render it as hard as concrete. This, indeed, is the only reason why the Eghas approve of the harmattan, its cold, dusty breath being exceedingly injurious to native constitutions.

One might have thought that this elaborate subdivision of labour would have the effect of multiplying the working power, as is the case in Europe. So it would, if the negro worked like the European, but that he never did, and never will do, unless absolutely compelled by a master of European extraction. He only subdivides labour in order to spare himself, and not with the least idea of increasing the amount of work that he can do in a given time.

The capital of the Eghas and their kindred sub-tribes is called Abeokuta, a name that has already become somewhat familiar to English ears on account of the attempts which have been made to introduce Christianity, civilization, and manufactures among a pagan, savage, and idle race of negroes.

The name of Abeokuta may be literally translated as Understone, and the title has been given to the place in allusion to the rock or stone around which it is built. The best description that has yet been given of Abeokuta is by Captain Burton, from whose writings the following particulars are gathered.

The city itself is surrounded with concentric lines of fortification, the outermost being some twenty miles in circumference. These walls are made of hardened mud, are about five or six feet in height, and have no embrasures for guns, an omission of very little importance seeing that there are scarcely any guns to place in them, and that, if they were fired, the defenders would be in much greater danger than the attacking force.

Utterly ignorant of the first principles of fortification, the Eghas have not troubled themselves to throw out bastions, or to take any means of securing a flanking fire, and they have made so liberal a use of matting, poles, and dry leaves within the fortification, that a carcass or a rocket would set the whole place in a blaze; and, if the attacking force were to take advantage of the direction of the wind, they might easily drive out the defenders merely by the smoke and flames of their own burning houses. Moreover the wall is of such frail material, and so thinly built, that a single bag of powder hung against it, and fired, would make a breach that would admit a column of soldiers together with their field-guns. Around the inner and principal wall runs a moat some five feet in breadth, partly wet and partly dry, and of so insignificant a depth that it could be filled up with a few fascines, or even with a dozen or so of dead bodies.

These defences, ludicrously inefficient as they would be if attacked by European soldiers, are very formidable obstacles to the Dahoman and Ibadan, against whose

inroads they are chiefly built. As a rule, the negro has a great horror of attacking a wall, and, as has been proved by actual conflict, the Dahomans could make no impression whatever upon these rude fortifications.

The real strength of the city, however, lies in the interior, and belongs to the rock or "stone" which gives the name to Abeokuta. Within the walls, the place is broken up into granite eminences, caverns, and forest clumps, which form natural fortifications, infinitely superior to those formed by the unskilful hands of the native engineer. Indeed, the selection of the spot seems to have been the only point in which the Egbas have exhibited the least appreciation of the art of warfare. The mode of fighting will presently be described.

The city itself measures some four miles in length by two in breadth, and is entered by five large gates, at each of which is placed a warder, who watches those who pass his gate, and exacts a toll from each passenger. The streets of Abeokuta are narrow, winding, and intricate, a mode of building which would aid materially in checking the advance of an enemy who had managed to pass the outer walls. There are several small market-places here and there, and one of them is larger than the rest, and called "Shek-pon," *i.e.* "Do the bachelors good," because on every fifth day, when the markets are held, there is a great concourse of people, and the single men can find plenty of persons who will fill their pipes, bring them drink, and cook their food.

"These, then, are my first impressions of Abeokuta. The streets are as narrow and irregular as those of Lagos, intersecting each other at every parallel angle, and, when broad and shady, we may be sure that they have been, or that they will be markets, which are found even under the eaves of the 'palace.' The sun, the vulture, and the pig are the only scavengers.

"The houses are of tempered mud—the sun-dried brick of Tuta and Nupè is here unknown—covered with little flying roofs of thatch, which burn with exemplary speed. At each angle there is a 'Kobbi'—a high, sharp gable of an elevation—to throw off the heavy rain. The form of the building is the gloomy hollow square, totally unlike the circular huts of the Krumen and the Kafirs. It resembles the Utum of the Arabs, which extending to Usaraga and Unyavyembe in Central Intertropical Africa, produces the 'Tembe,' and which, through the 'Patio' of Spain, found its way into remote Galway.

"There are courts within courts for the various subdivisions of the polygamous family, and here also sheep and goats are staked down. The sexes eat alone; every wife is a 'free-dealer,' consequently there is little more unity than in a nunnery. In each patio there is usually some central erection intended as a store-house. Into these central courts the various doors, about four feet wide, open through a verandah or piazza, where, chimneys being unknown, the fire is built, and where the inmates sleep on mats spread under the piazza, or in the rooms, as the fancy takes them. Cooking also is performed in the open air, as the coarse earthen pots scattered over the surface prove.

"The rooms, which number from ten to twenty in a house, are windowless, and purposely kept dark, to keep out the sun's glare; they vary from ten to fifteen feet in length, and from seven to eight in breadth. The furniture is simple—rude cots and settles, earthen pots and coarse plates, grass bags for cloth and cowries, and almost invariably weapons, especially an old musket and its leathern case for ammunition.

"The number of inhabitants may vary from ten to five hundred, and often more in the largest. There is generally but one single large outer door, with charms suspended over it."

The military strength of Abeokuta has been tested by actual warfare, and has been found to be quite adequate to repel native troops. Generally, an African fight consists of a vast amount of noise attended by a very small amount of slaughter, but in the various attacks of Dahome on Abeokuta the feelings of both parties appear to have been so completely excited that the slaughter on both sides was really considerable.

The fact was, that each party had a long-standing grudge against the other, and meant to gratify it. Gezo, the father of King Gelele, had been defeated ignominiously near Abeokuta, and had even lost his stool, the emblem of sovereignty. Burning to avenge

themselves, the Dahomans made friends with the inhabitants of Ishogga, a small town some fifteen miles to the south-west of Abeokuta, who advised their guests as to the particular gate which it was best to attack, the time of day when an assault would be most likely to succeed, and a ford by which they could pass the river.

Trusting to these counsellors, they crossed the river at the ford, which proved to be so bad that they wetted all their ammunition. They made the attack at mid-day, when they were told that every one would be asleep or at work in the gardens, which are situated at a considerable distance from the city. And when they came to the walls of the city they found the defenders all on the alert, and ready to give them a warm reception. Lastly, they attacked a gate which had been lately fortified, whereas another, on the opposite side of the town, was very weak, and might have been taken easily. Consequently, they had to return to their own country, vowing vengeance against their treacherous allies.

After Gezo's death, Gelele took up the feud, and, after allaying suspicion by continually proclaiming war against the Eghas, and as invariably staying at home, in the tenth year he followed up his threat with a rapid attack upon Ishogga, carried off a great number of prisoners, and killed those whom he could not conveniently take away.

Flushed by success, he determined to assemble a large force and attack the capital itself. In March 1851, some fifteen or sixteen thousand Dahoman soldiers marched against Abeokuta, and a fierce fight ensued, the result being that the Dahomans had to retreat, leaving behind them some two thousand killed, and wounded, and prisoners. As might be supposed, the Amazons, being the fiercest fighters, suffered most, while the loss on the Eghan side was comparatively trifling. Ten years afterwards, another expedition marched against Abeokuta, but never reached it, small-pox having broken out in the ranks, and frightened the soldiers home again.

The last attack was fatal to Dahoman ambition. The Eghas, expecting their foe, had arranged for their reception, and had driven tunnels through their walls, so that they could make unexpected sallies on the enemy. When the Dahoman army appeared, all the Eghan soldiers were at their posts, the women being told off to carry food and drink to the soldiers, while some of them seized swords, and insisted on doing duty at the walls.

As soon as the invaders approached, a strong sally was made, but, as the Dahomans marched on without returning the fire, the Eghas dashed back again and joined their comrades on the walls.

Presently, a Dahoman cannon was fired, dismounting itself by the force of its recoil, so as to be of no further use, and its report was followed by an impetuous rush at the walls. Had the Dahomans only thought of making a breach, or even of filling up the tiny moat, they might have had a chance of success, but as it was they had none. The soldiers, especially the Amazons, struggled gallantly for some time; and if individual valour could have taken the town, they would have done so. But they were badly commanded, the officers lost heart, and even though the soldiers were scaling the walls, creeping through the tunnels, and fighting bravely at the very muzzles of the enemy's guns, they gave the order for retreat.

Just at that time, a large body of Eghas, which had made unseen a wide circuit, fell upon them in the rear, and completed the rout. All fled without order, except the division which Gelele himself was commanding, and which retired with some show of discipline, turning and firing on their adversaries, when pressed too closely, and indeed showing what they could have done if their officers had known their business.

The Dahomans lost everything that they had taken with them, their brass guns, a great number of new muskets, and other weapons falling into the hands of the enemy. Besides these, the king himself was obliged to abandon a number of his wives and daughters, his horse, his precious sandals with their golden crosses, his wardrobe, his carriages of which he was so proud, his provisions, and his treasures of coral and velvet. It was calculated that some four or five thousand Dahomans were killed in this disastrous battle, while some fifteen hundred prisoners were captured; the Eghas only losing forty killed, and about one hundred wounded. True to their savage nature,

the Egbas cut the corpses of the dead to pieces, and even the women who passed by the body of a Dahoman soldier slashed it with a knife, or pelted it with stones.

It has been thought that the Abeokutas are comparatively guiltless in blood-shedding, but it is now known that in this respect there is really very little difference between the three great nations of Western Africa, except that the destruction of human life is less at Abeokuta than at Agbome, and perhaps that the Egbas are more reticent on the subject than the Ashantis or Dahomans. Even in Abeokuta itself, which has been supposed to be under the influence of Christianity, an annual human sacrifice takes place, and the same



THE ATTACK ON ABEOKUTA.

ceremony is performed in other parts of the kingdom. As in Agbome, when a human sacrifice is offered, it is with the intention of offering to the dead that which is most valuable to the living. The victim is enriched with cowries, and plied with rum until he is quite intoxicated, and then, after being charged with all sorts of messages to the spirits of the dead, he is solemnly decapitated. Victims are sacrificed when great men die, and are supposed to be sent to the dead man as his attendants in the spirit world.

As to the religion and superstitions of the Egbas, they are so exactly like those of other Western Africans that there is little need to mention them. It only remains to describe the remarkable system called "Ogboni." The Ogboni are a society of enormous power, which has been compared, but erroneously, to freemasonry. Any one who is acquainted with the leading principles of freemasonry, and has studied the mental condition of the Egbas, or indeed any other West African tribe, must see that such a

parallel is ludicrously wrong. In freemasonry there are two leading principles, the one being the unity of the Creator, and the second the fellowship of man. Now, as the Egbas believe in numberless gods, and have the strongest interest in slavery, it is evident that they cannot have invented a system which is diametrically opposed to both these tenets.

The system of Ogboni is partly political and partly religious. It may be entered by a naked boy of ten years old, provided that he be a free-born Egba and of good repute. The fraternity extends itself throughout the whole of the country occupied by the Egbas, and in every village there is a hut or lodge devoted expressly to the use of the society. The form of this lodge varies slightly, but the general features are the same in all. "It is a long low building, only to be distinguished by the absence of loungers, fronted by a deep and shady verandah, with stumpy polygonal clay pillars, and a single door, carefully closed. The panels are adorned with iron alto-relievos of ultra-Egyptian form; snakes, hawk-headed figures, and armed horsemen in full front, riding what are intended to be horses in profile; the whole coloured red, black, and yellow. The temples of Obatala are similarly decorated.

"The doors have distinct panels, upon which are seen a leopard, a fish, a serpent, and a land tortoise. Mr. Beaven remarks that one of the carvings was a female figure, with one hand and one foot, probably a half Obatala, or the female principle of Nature, and the monster was remarkable for having a queue of very long hair, with a ball or globe at the end.

"A gentleman who had an opportunity of overlooking the Ogboni lodge from the Ake church steeple described it as a hollow building with three courts, of which the innermost, provided with a single door, was that reserved for the elders, the holy of holies, like the Kadasta Kadastan of the Abyssinians. He considers that the courts are intended for the different degrees.

"The stranger must, however, be careful what he believes concerning these mysteries. The Rev. W. Beaven asserts that the initiated are compelled to kneel down and drink a mixture of blood and water from a hole in the earth. The Egbas deny this. Moreover they charge Mr. Beaven with endeavouring to worm out their secrets for the purpose of publication. As all are pledged to the deepest reticence, and as it would be fatal to reveal any mystery, if any there be, we are hardly likely to be troubled with over-information."

The miscellaneous superstitions of the Egbas are very miscellaneous indeed. Like the Dahomans, they divide their deities into different classes, like the major and minor gods of the ancients, and, like them, they occasionally deify a dead ruler, and class him with the minor gods. The native word for the greater god is Ovisha, a title which is prefixed to the special names of those deities. Thus, Ovisha Khá, or the great Ovisha, is the chief of them. His sacred emblem or symbol is a ship, and it was he who created the first man.

The next in order is Shango, who is evidently an example of an apotheosis, as he has the attributes of Vulcan, Hercules, Tuhai Cain, and Jupiter Tonans, and is said to have a palace of brass, and ten thousand horses. He presides over lightning and fire, and if thunder strikes a house, his priest rushes into the hut to find the weapon that Shango has cast, and is followed by a tumultuous mob, who plunder the dwelling effectually. Captain Burton saw one of the so-called Shango-stones, which was nothing but a lump of white quartz, of course placed in the hut by the priest.

His symbol is a small wooden bat, and his worshippers carry a leathern bag, because Shango was fond of predatory wars. If war impends, his priest takes sixteen cowries, and flings them in the air, and those which fall with the opening downward are thought to portend war, while those which have the opening upwards signify peace. The last of the great three is Ipa, apparently an abstractive rather than an objective deity. He is worshipped by a select society called the "Fathers of Secrets," into which none but males can be initiated. His chief priest lives on a mountain at several days' distance from Abeokuta, and close by his dwelling is the sacred palm-tree with sixteen boughs produced by the nuts planted by the sixteen founders of the empire. A second priest at Abeokuta is called the King of the Groove.

The emblem of Ipa is a palm-nut with four holes, and these nuts are used in divination, the principle being something like the mode of casting lots with cowries. Captain Burton's account of the proceeding is interesting. "He counted sixteen nuts, freed them from dust, and placed them in a bowl on the ground, full of yams half-boiled, crushed, and covered with some acid vegetable infusion.

"His acolyte, a small boy, was then called, and made to squat near the bowl, resting his body on the outer edge of the feet, which were turned inwards, and to take from the fetish-man two or three bones, seeds, and shells, some of which are of good, others of bad omen. Elevating them, he rested his hands on his knees. The adept cast the nuts from one hand to the other, retaining some in the left, and, while manipulating, dropped others into the bowl. He then stooped down, drew with the index and medius fingers on the yams, inspected the nuts, and occasionally referred to the articles in the boy's hand."

The priests of Ipa are known by necklaces made of strings of beads twisted together, and having ten large white and green beads at some distance apart.

Then there is the Ovisha of children, one of which is carried about by women who have borne twins when one of them dies or is killed. It is a wooden little image, about seven or eight inches in height, carved into the rude semblance of humanity. The images are nearly all made by some men at Lagos, who charge about three shillings for each. Beside all these deities, which may be ranked among the beneficent class, there are evil deities, who are worshipped by way of propitiation.

Next come some semi-human deities, who serve as the correctors of public morals. The two chief of these deities are Egugun and Oro. The former is supposed to be a sort of a vampire, being a dead body risen temporarily from the grave, and acts the same rôle as Mumbo Jumbo in another part of Western Africa. Egugun makes his appearance in the villages, and very much frightens the women, who either actually believe him to be a veritable resuscitated corpse, or who assert that they believe it, in fear of public opinion. The adult males, and even the free-born boys, know all about Egugun, as is likely, when the deity in question is personated by any one who can borrow the requisite dress from the fetish-man. Captain Burton once met Egugun in the street. The demon's face was hidden by a plaited network, worn like a mask, and on his head was a hood, covered with streamers of crimson and dirty white, which hung down to his waist and mingled with similar streamers attached to his dress. He wore on his breast a very powerful fetish, i.e. a penny mirror; and his feet were covered with great shoes, because Egugun is supposed to be a footless deity.

The other deity, Oro, has a wider range of duties, his business being to attend to public morality. He mostly remains in the woods, and but seldom makes his appearance in public. Oro has a very strong voice, arising, in point of fact, from a thin slip of wood, about a foot in length, which is tied firmly to a stick, and which produces a kind of roaring sound when properly handled.

He is supposed to be unknown to the women, who are not allowed to be out of their houses whenever the voice of Oro is heard. Consequently, about seven or eight in the evening, when the well-known booming cry of Oro is heard, the women scuffle off to their houses, and the adult males go out into the streets, and there is at once a scene of much excitement. Dances and tumbling, processions and speech-making, go on with vast vigour, while the Ogboni lodges are filled with devotees, all anxious to be talking at once, and every one giving his own opinion, no matter how absurd it may be.

Those who have been guilty of moral offences are then proclaimed and punished; and on some occasions there is so much business to be done that the town is given up to Oro for an entire day. On these occasions the women pass a very unpleasant time, their hours of imprisonment being usually spent in quarrelling with each other. In order to make the voice of Oro more awful, the part of the demon is played by several of the initiated, who go into the woods in various directions, and by sounding their wooden calls at the same time carry the idea that Oro is omnipresent.

Oro does really act as a censor of public morals, and it is very clear that he is attended by armed followers, who carry out a sort of rude and extemporised justice, like that which was exercised by the "Regulators" of America, some fifty or sixty years ago. The bodies

of delinquents have been found in the hush, their throats out and their legs broken by the spirit in question.

The chief, or king, of the Egbas is known by the name of the Alaké, which is a transmissible title, like Pharaoh or Caesar, and the whole system of government is a kind of feudal monarchy, not unlike that of England in the days of John. The Alaké does not reign supreme, like the King of Dahome or Ashanti, before whom the highest in the realm prostrate themselves and roll humbly in the dust. He is trammelled with a number of councillors and officers, and with a sort of parliament called the Bale, which is composed of the head men or chiefs of the various towns. The reader may remember that the King of Ashanti found that he was in danger of suffering from a similar combination, and he took the prudent measure of limiting their number while he had the power. The Alaké has never done so, and in consequence those who are nominally and individually his servants are practically and collectively his masters.

The Ogboni lodges have also to be consulted in any important point, so that the private life of the Alaké of the Egbas is far from being so agreeable as that of the King of Dahome.

Okekunu, the Alaké at the time when Captain Burton lived in Abeokuta, was an ill-favoured, petulant, and cunning old ruler. In his way, he was fond of state, and delighted to exhibit his so-called power in a manner truly African, displaying an equal amount of pageantry and trashiness.

If he goes to pay a visit, he must needs do so under a huge pink silk umbrella, at the end of a motley procession. At the head is carried the sacred emblem of royalty, a wooden stool covered with coarse red serge, which is surrounded by a number of chiefs, who pay the greatest attention to it. A long train of ragged swordsmen followed; and last came the Alaké, clothed in a "Guinea-fowl" shirt—a spotted article of some value—and a great red velvet robe under which he tottered along with much difficulty. He wears trousers of good purple velvet with a stripe of gold tinsel, and on his feet are huge slippers, edged with monkey skin.

On his head he wears a sort of fez cap of crimson velvet, the effect of which is ruined by a number of blue beads hung fringe-wise round the top. The string of red coral beads hangs round the neck, and a double bracelet of the same material is wound upon each wrist.

When he receives a visitor, he displays his grandeur by making his visitors wait for a time proportionate to their rank, but in case they should be of great consequence, he alleviates the tediousness of the time by sending them rum and gin, both of the very worst quality; and if they be of exceptionally high rank, he will send a bottle of liqueurs, *i.e.* spirits of wine and water, well sweetened, and flavoured with a few drops of essential oil.

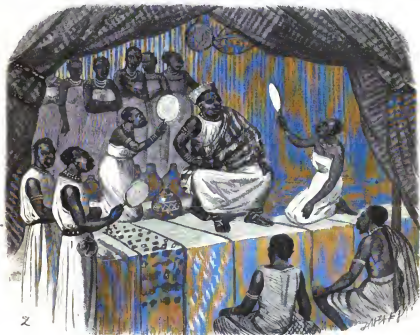
To a stranger, the palace presents a mean and ugly appearance, and, as Captain Burton remarks, is as unworthy of Abeokuta as St. James's is of London. It is a tumble-down "swish" house, long and rambling, and has several courts. Along one side of the inner court runs a verandah, the edge of which comes within some four feet of the ground, and is supported by huge clay pillars. Five hexagonal columns divide the verandah into compartments, the centre of which is the Alaké's private room, and is kept veiled by a curtain. The verandah, or antechamber, is filled with the great men of Abeokuta, and, according to Burton's account, they are the most villanous-looking set of men that can well be conceived; and although he has seen as great a variety of faces as any one, he says that he never saw such hideous heads and faces elsewhere.

"Their skulls were depressed in front, and projecting cocoa-nut-like behind; the absence of beards, the hideous lines and wrinkles that seared and furrowed the external parchment, and the cold, unrelenting cruelty of their physiognomy in repose, suggested the idea of the eunuch torturers erst so common in Asia. One was sure that for pity or mercy it would be as well to address a wounded mandril. The atrocities which these ancients have witnessed, and the passion which they have acquired for horrors, must have set the mark of the beast upon their brows."

Though the assemblage consisted of the richest men of the Egbas, not a vestig -ata

splendour or wealth appeared about any of them, the entire clothing of the most powerful among them being under sixpence in value. In fact, they dare not exhibit wealth, knowing that, if they did so, it would be confiscated.

"As for the Alaké himself, his appearance was not much more prepossessing than that of his subjects. Okekunu was a large, brawny, and clumsy-looking man, nearly seventy years of age, and his partially shaven head did not add to his beauty. Besides, he had lost all his upper teeth except the canines, so that his upper lip sank into an unpleasant



THE ALAKÉ'S COURT.

depression. His lower teeth were rapidly decaying from his habit of taking snuff negro fashion, by placing it between the lower lip and the teeth, and, in consequence of the gap, the tip of his tongue protruded in a very disagreeable manner. He had lost one eye by a blow from a stone, and as he assumed a semi-comatose expression, was not a pleasant person to look at, and certainly not very regal in aspect."

The king must be selected from one of four tribes, and both the present king and his predecessor belonged to the Ake tribe.

CHAPTER LIX.

BONNY.

THE PRINCIPAL TRADE OF BONNY—KING PEPPEL AND HIS HISTORY—THE DEFRAUDED EMIGRANTS—MR. READE'S INTERVIEW WITH PEPPEL—ARCHITECTURE OF BONNY—THE JU-JU HOUSES, PRIVATE AND PUBLIC—CANNIBALISM AT BONNY—THE JU-JU EXECUTION—WHY THE EXECUTIONER DID NOT EAT THE HEAD—DAILY LIFE OF A BONNY GENTLEMAN—DRESS OF MEN AND WOMEN—SUPERSTITIONS—MUMBO-JUMBO AND HIS OFFICE—LAST RESOURCE OF A HEN-PECKED HUSBAND—A TERRIBLE GREGGEE AND ITS RESULT—THE ORKORRE MEN OR MAGICIANS—INORNIOS MODE OF WEAVING THEIR SPELLS—ESCAPE OF AN IMPOSTOR.

PASSING a little southwards along the west coast, we come to the well-known Bonny River, formerly the great slave depôt of Western Africa, and now the centre of the palm-oil trade. Unfortunately there is as much cheating in the palm-oil trade as in gold and ivory; the two latter being plugg'd, and the former mixed with sand, so that it has to be boiled down before it can be sent from the coast.

Bonny is familiar to English ears on account of the yellow-black chief who was pleased to call himself king, and who was well known in England as Pepper, King of Bonny. His name is varied as Pepper, Pimento, or Peppel. He is descended from Obullo an Ibo (or Eboe) chief, who settled with his slaves on the Bonny River, and who was succeeded by his son and grandson, each of whom took the name of Pepper.

Being of a quarrelsome disposition, the present king shot a wife because she displeased him, murdered a chief called Manilla Peppel because he was jealous, and was ruining the trade of the river by his perpetual wars with the Calabars. So, at the request of all the native chiefs and traders, he was deposed, and his nephew Daphe placed in his stead. Daphe, however, died soon afterwards,—poisoned, it is believed, at Peppel's instigation; and then the government was handed over to four regents, while Pimento was transported to Ascension, a place which he was afterwards fond of calling his St. Helena. However, he proved himself to be a clever savage, and, by dint of importunity, contrived to be taken to England, where he arrived in 1857.

Possessing to the full the imitative capacity of the negro, he adopted English customs with wonderful facility, abandoning, according to Captain Burton, his favourite dish of a boy's palms, and drinking champagne and sherry instead of trade rum. Soon he became religious, was baptized, and turned teetotaler, gaining thereby the good-will of a large class of people. He asked for twenty thousand pounds to establish a missionary station, and actually induced a number of English who knew nothing of Africa, or the natural mendacity of the African savage, to accompany him as his suite, promising them splendid salaries and high rank at court.

No one who knows the negro character will be surprised to hear that when the king and his suite arrived at Bonny the latter found themselves cheated and ruined. They discovered that the "palace" was a collection of hovels inside a mud wall; that Bonny itself

is nothing more than a quantity of huts in a mud flat; and that the best street was finitely more filthy than the worst street in the worst part of London. As to the private life of the king, the less said about it the better.

Their health rapidly failed under the privations which they suffered, and the horrible mours of the Bonny River, which are so sickening that even the hardened traveller Captain Burton had to stop his experienced nostrils with camphorated cotton, as he was waded up the river at low water. As to the royal salaries and apartments in the palace, they were found to be as imaginary as the palace itself and the rank at court, the king representing each of the officials with a couple of yams as an equivalent for pay and clothing.

How genuine was the civilization and Christianity and teetotalism of Peppel may be imagined from an interview which Mr. W. Reade had with him after his return:—"I went ashore with the doctor on a visit to Peppel, the famous king of Bonny. . . . In one of the hovels was seated the monarch, and the scene was well adapted to the muse of his poet laureate. The Africans have a taste for crockery ware, much resembling that of the last generation for old china, and a predilection for dog-flesh, which is bred expressly for the table, and exposed for sale in the public market.

"And there sat Peppel, who had lived so long in England; behind him a pile of willow-pattern crockery, before him a calabash of dog-stew and palaver sauce. It is always thus with these savages. The instincts inherited from their forefathers will ever triumph over a sprinkling of foreign reason. Their intellects have a *rete mucosum* as well as their skins. As soon as they return to their own country, they take off all their civilization and their clothes, and let body and mind go naked.

"Like most negroes of rank, Peppel has a yellow complexion, as light as that of a mulatto. His features express intelligence, but of a low and cunning kind. In every word and look he exhibits that habit of suspicion which one finds in half-civilized natures."

Peppel, although restored to Bonny, has scarcely any real power, even in his own limited dominions, from which he dares not stir. Yet, with the cool impudence of a thorough savage, he actually proposed to establish a consul in London at a salary of 500*l.*, stating as his reason that he had always allowed the English consuls to visit his dominions in the Bight of Benin.

The architecture of the Bonny country is not very elaborate, being composed of swish and wattle, supported by posts. The floors and walls are of mud, which can be obtained in any amount, and the general look of the houses has been well compared to Africanized Swiss, the roofs being very high, and the gables very sharp. Ordinary houses have three rooms, a kitchen, a living room, and a Ju-ju room or chapel; but those of the wealthy men have abundance of chambers and passages. There are no chimneys, and as the door must therefore be kept open if a fire is lighted, the threshold is at least eighteen inches high, in order to prevent the intrusion of strange beasts. It is not thought to be etiquette to step over the threshold when the master of the house is sitting within, or he will be afflicted with sickness, thinking himself bewitched.

The Ju-ju room or chapel is a necessary adjunct to every Bonny house, and within it is the fetish, or ju-ju, which is the guardian of the house, and corresponds with the Lares and Penates of the ancients. The negro contrives to utilize the ju-ju room, making it a store-house for his most valued property, such as cowries or rum, knowing that no one will touch it in so sacred a place. As to the ju-ju itself, anything answers the purpose, and an Englishman is sometimes troubled to preserve his gravity when he sees a page of *Punch*, a cribbage peg, a pill-box, or a pair of braces, doing duty as the household god of the establishment.

The great Ju-ju house of the place is a most ghastly-looking edifice, and is well described by Captain Burton. It is built of swish, and is an oblong roofless house, of forty or fifty feet in length. A sort of altar is placed at the end, sheltered from the rain by a small roof of its own. Under the roof are nailed rows of human skulls mostly painted in different colours, and one of them is conspicuous by a large black beard, which is doubtless a rude copy of the beard worn by the man to whom it originally belonged.

Between them are rows of goat-skulls streaked with red and white, while other skulls are strewn about the floor, and others again are impaled on the tops of sticks. Under the altar is a round hole with a raised clay rim, in which is received the blood of the victims together with the sacred libations. Within this Ju-ju house are hurried the bodies of the kings.

This house well illustrates the character of the people—a race which take a positive pleasure in the sight of blood, and in inflicting and witnessing pain. All over the country the traveller comes upon scenes of blood, pain, and suffering. There is hardly a village where he does not come upon animals tied in some agonizing position and left to die there. Goats and fowls are mostly fastened to posts with their heads downwards, and blood is the favourite colour for painting the faces of men. Even the children of prisoners taken in war—the war in question being mostly an unsuspected attack on an unprepared village—are hung by the middle from the masts of the canoes, while the parents are reserved to be sacrificed and eaten.

About this last statement there has been much incredulity, and of course, when questioned, the Bonny negroes flatly deny the accusation. There is, however, no doubt of the fact, inasmuch as Europeans have witnessed the act of cannibalism. For example, old King Peppel, the father of the Pimento whose life has been briefly sketched, gave a great banquet in honour of a victory which he had gained over Calabar, and in which Amakree, the king of that district, was taken prisoner. The European traders were invited to the banquet, and were most hospitably entertained. They were, however, horrified to see the principal dish which was placed before Peppel. It was the bleeding heart of Amakree, warm and palpitating as it was torn from the body. Peppel devoured the heart with the greatest eagerness, exclaiming at the same time, "This is the way I serve my enemies."

More recently, Dr. Hutchinson witnessed a scene of cannibalism. He had heard that something of the kind was contemplated, although it was kept very quiet. On the appointed morning he had himself rowed to the shore at some distance from the Ju-ju house, near which he concealed himself, and waited for the result. The rest of the adventure must be told in his own words.

"I know not of what kind are the sensations felt by those around Newgate, waiting for an execution in the very heart of London's great city; but I know that on the banks of an African river, in the grey dawn of morning, when the stillness was of that oppressive nature which is calculated to produce the most gloomy impressions, with dense vapours and foul smells arising from decomposing mangroves and other causes of malaria floating about, with a heaviness of atmosphere that depressed the spirits, amidst a community of cannibals, I *do* know that, although under the protection of a man-of-war, I felt on this occasion a combined sensation of suspense, anxiety, horror, and indefinable dread of I cannot tell what, that I pray God it may never be my fate to endure again.

"Day broke, and, nearly simultaneous with its breaking, the sun shone out. As I looked through the slit in the wall on the space between my place of concealment and the Ju-ju house, I observed no change from its appearance the evening before. No gibbet, nor axe, nor gallows, nor rope—no kind of preparation, nothing significant of death, save the skulls on the pillars of the Ju-ju house, that seemed leering at me with an expression at once strange and vacant. It would have been a relief in the awful stillness of the place to have heard something of what I had read of the preparations for an execution in Liverpool or London—of the hammering suggestive of driving nails into scaffold, drop, or coffin, of a crowd gathering round the place before early dawn, and of the solemn tolling of the bell that chimed another soul into eternity. Everything seemed as if nothing beyond the routine of daily life were to take place.

"Could it be that I had been misinformed; that the ceremony was adjourned to another time, or was to be carried out elsewhere?

"No, a distant murmur of gabbling voices was heard approaching nearer and nearer, till, passing the corner house on my left, I saw a group of negroes—an indiscriminate crowd of all ages and both sexes—so huddled together that no person whom I could

particularly distinguish as either an executioner or culprit was visible among them. But above their clattering talk came the sound of a clanking chain that made one shudder.

"They stopped in the middle of the square opposite the Ju-ju house, and ceased talking.

"One commanding voice uttered a single word, and down they sat upon the grass, forming a circle round two figures, standing upright in the centre—the executioner and the man about to be killed. The former was remarkable only by the black skull-cap which he had on him, and by a common cutlass which he held in his hand. The latter had chains round his neck, his wrists, and his ankles. There was no sign of fear or cowardice about him—no seeming consciousness of the dreadful fate before him—no evidence even upon his face of that dogged stubbornness which is said to be exhibited by some persons about to undergo an ignominious death.

"Save that he stood upright one would scarcely have known that he was alive. Amongst the spectators, too, there was a silent impassiveness which was appalling. Not a word, nor gesture, nor glance of sympathy, that could make me believe I looked at beings who had a vestige of humanity among them.

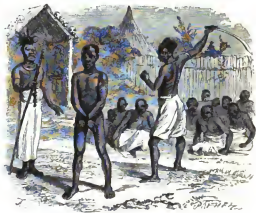
"As the Ju-ju butcher stepped back and measured his distance to make an effectual swoop at his victim's neck, the man moved not a muscle, but stood as if he were unconscious—till—

"Chop! The first blow felled him to the ground. The noise of a chopper falling on meat is familiar to most people. No other sound was here—none from the man; not a whisper nor a murmur from those who were seated about! I was nearly crying out in mental agony, and the sound of that first stroke will haunt my ears to my dying day. How I wished some one to talk or scream, to destroy the impression of that fearful hough, and the still more awful silence that followed it!

"Again the weapon was raised to continue the decapitation—another blow as the man lay prostrate, and then a sound broke the silence! But, O Father of mercy! of what a kind was that noise—a gurgle and a gasp, accompanying the dying spasm of the struck-down man!

"Once more the weapon was lifted—I saw the blood flow in gory horror down the blade to the butcher's hand, and there it was visible, in God's bright sunshine, to the whole host of heaven. Not a word had yet been uttered by the crowd. More chopping and cleaving, and the head, severed from the body, was put by the Ju-ju executioner into a calabash, which was carried off by one of his women to be cooked. He then repeated another cabalistic word, or perhaps the same as at first, and directly all who were seated rose up, whilst he walked away.

"A yell, such as reminded me of a company of tigers, arose from the multitude—cutlasses were flourished as they crowded round the body of the dead man—sounds of cutting and chopping arose amidst the clamour of the voices, and I began to question myself whether, if I were on the other side of the river Styx, I should see what I was looking at here through the little slit in the wall of my hiding-place: a crowd of human vultures gloating over the headless corpse of a murdered brother negro—boys and girls walking away from the crowd, holding pieces of bleeding flesh in their hands, while the dripping life-fluid marked their road as they went along; and one woman snapping



THE JU-JU EXECUTION.

from the hands of another—both of them raising their voices in clamour—a part of the body of that poor man, in whom the breath of life was vigorous not a quarter of an hour ago.

"The whole of the body was at length divided, and nothing left behind but the blood. The intestines were taken away to be given to an iguana—the Bonny-man's tutelary guardian. But the blood was still there, in glistening pools, though no more notice was taken of it by the gradually dispersing crowd than if it were a thing as common in that town as heaven's bright dew is elsewhere. A few dogs were on the spot, who devoured the fragments. Two men arrived to spread sand over the place, and there was no interruption to the familiar sound of coopers' hammering just beginning in the cask-houses, or to the daily work of boiling palm-oil puncheons on board the ships."

On passing the Ju-ju house afterwards, Dr. Hutchinson saw the relics of this sacrifice. They consisted of the larger bones of the body and limbs, which had evidently been cooked, and every particle of flesh eaten from them. The head is the perquisite of the executioner, as has already been mentioned. Some months afterwards, Dr. Hutchinson met the same executioner, who was said to have exercised his office again a few days previously, and to have eaten the head of his victim. Being upbraided with having committed so horrible an act, he replied that he had not eaten the head—his cook having spoiled it by not having put enough pepper to it.

The whole life of the Bonny-man, and indeed of all the many tribes that inhabit the neighbourhood of the Niger and live along it, is in accordance with the traits which have been mentioned. Of course, the women do all the real work, the man's working-day being usually employed in coming on board some trading-ship early in the morning, chaffering with the agent, and making bargains as well as he can. He asks for everything he sees, on the principle that, even if it be refused, he is no worse after than before; contrives to breakfast as many times as possible at the ship's expense, and about mid-day goes home to repose after the fatigues of the day.

As to his dress, it consists of a cloth, in the choice of which he is very fastidious. A bandkerchief is folded diagonally and passed through the loop of his knife-belt, so as to attach it to his right side, and this, with a few strings of beads and rings, completes his costume. His woolly hair is combed out with the coarsest imaginable comb, made of a few wooden skewers lashed side by side, and diverging from each other towards the points, and his skin is polished up with palm-oil.

The women's working-day is a real fact, being begun by washing clothes in the creek, and consisting of making nets, hats, lines, and mats, and going to market. These are the favourites, and their life is a comparatively easy one; while the others, on whom their despotic master does not deign to cast an eye of affection, are simply his slaves, and are subjected to water-drawing, wood-cutting, catching and curing fish.

The dress of the women is not unlike that of the opposite sex, the chief distinction being that their fashionable paint is blue instead of red. The colouring is put on by a friend, usually one who regularly practises the art of painting the human body in patterns. Chequers, like those that were once so common on the door-posts of public-houses, are very much in favour, and so are wavy stripes, beginning with lines scarcely thicker than hairs, and swelling out to half an inch or more in breadth. Arabesque patterns, curves, and scrolls are also largely used.

Throughout a considerable portion of that part of Western Africa which is inhabited by the negroes there is found a semi-human demon, who is universally respected, at least by the feminine half of the community. His name is MUMBO JUMBO, and his sway is upheld by the men, while the women have no alternative but to submit to it.

On the branch of a tree near the entrance of each town hangs a dress, made of slips of bark sewn rudely together. It is the simplest possible dress, being little more than a bark sack, with a hole at the top for the head and another at each side for the hands. Close by it hangs an equally simple mask, made of an empty gourd, with two round holes for the eyes of the wearer, and decorated with a tuft of feathers. In order to make it more fantastically hideous, the mask is painted with scarlet, so that it looks very much like the face of a clown in a pantomime.

At night the people assemble as usual to sing and dance, when suddenly faint distant howlings are heard in the woods. This is the cry of Mumbo Jumbo, and all the women feel horribly frightened, though they are obliged to pretend to be delighted. The cries are heard nearer and nearer, and at last Mumbo Jumbo himself, followed by a number of attendants armed with sticks, and clothed in the dress which is kept for his use, appears in the noisy circle, carrying a rod in his hand. He is loudly welcomed, and the song and dance goes on around him with delight. Suddenly, Mumbo Jumbo walks up to one of the women and touches her with his rod. His attendants instantly seize on the unfortunate woman, tear off all her clothes, drag her to a post which is always kept for such occasions, tie her to it, and inflict a terrific beating on her. No one dares to pity her.



MUMBO JUMBO.

The men are not likely to do so, and the women all laugh and jeer at their suffering companion, pointing at her and mocking her cries: partly because they fear that if they did not do so they might be selected for the next victims, and partly because—like the savages that they are at heart—they feel an exultation at seeing some one suffering a penalty which they have escaped.

The offence for which the woman has suffered is perfectly well known by all the spectators, and by none better than by the sufferer herself. The fact is, she has been bad-tempered at home, quarrelling, in all probability, with her fellow wives, and has not yielded to the admonitions of her husband. Consequently, at the next favourable opportunity, either the husband himself, or a man whom he has instructed, induces the dress of Mumbo Jumbo, and inflicts a punishment which serves equally as a corrective to the disobedient wife and a warning to others that they had better not follow her example.

Mumbo Jumbo does not always make his appearance on these nocturnal festivities, as the men know that he inspires more awe if he is reserved for those instances in which the husband has tried all the means in his power to keep the peace at home, but finds that his unsupported authority is no more respected. The reader will remember that a demon of a similar character is to be found in Dahome.

It is to be wished that all the superstitions of the land were as harmless as that of Mumbo Jumbo, which nobody believes, though every one pretends to do so, and which, at all events, has some influence on the domestic peace. Some of them, however, are very terrible, and involve an amount of human suffering which would deter any but a savage from performing them. It is very difficult to learn the nature of these superstitions, as the negroes always try to conceal them from Europeans, especially when they involve the shedding of blood. One astounding instance has, however, been related. A town was in danger of attack from a powerful tribe that inhabited the neighbourhood, and the king was so much alarmed that he sent for the magicians, and consulted with them as to the best method of repelling the enemy.

Accordingly, the people were summoned together in front of the principal gate, when two holes were dug in the ground close to each other. Songs and dances began as usual, until suddenly the chief magician pointed to a girl who was standing among the spectators. She was instantly seized, and a leg thrust into each hole, which was then filled up with earth so that she could not move. By command of the magicians, a number of men brought lumps of wet clay, which they built around her body in a pillar-like form, kneading them closely as they proceeded, and gradually covering her with clay. At last even her head was covered with the clay, and the poor victim of superstition soon ceased to breathe.

This clay pillar with the body of the girl within it stood for years in front of the gate, and so terrified were the hostile tribes at so powerful a fetish, or gregree, that they dared not carry out their plan of attack.

The natives erect these gregrees on every imaginable occasion, and so ward off every possible calamity; and, as they will pay freely for such safeguards, the fetish-men are naturally unwilling to refuse a request, and so to break up a profitable trade. They are, of course, aware that their clients will in many cases suffer from the very calamity which they sought to avoid, and that they will come to make bitter complaints. They therefore take care to impose on the recipient some condition by way of a loop-hole, through which they may escape. On one such instance the man bought a fetish against fever, which, however, seized him and nearly killed him. The condition which had been imposed on him was abstinence from goat's flesh, and this condition he knew that he had fulfilled. But the fetish-man was not to be baffled by such a complaint, and utterly discomfited his angry client by asserting that, when his patient was dining at another town, a personal enemy, who knew the conditions on which the gregree was given, dropped a little goat's-flesh broth into his bowl, and so broke the spell.

Absolute faith in the gregree is another invariable condition. On one stormy day a party of natives had to cross the river, and applied for a gregree against accidents. They crossed safely enough, but on re-crossing the boat was upset, and some of the party were drowned. The survivors went in a body to the gregree-maker, and upbraided him with the accident. He heard them very patiently, and then informed the complainants that the misfortune was entirely caused by the incredulity of the steersman, who tried to sound the river with his paddle in order to discover whether they were in shallow water. This action indicated mistrust, and so the power of the spell was broken. The cunning fellow had seen the accident, and, having ascertained that the steersman had been drowned, made the assertion boldly, knowing that the men had been too frightened to observe closely, and that the accused could not contradict the statement.

CHAPTER LX.

THE MANDINGOES.

LANGUAGE AND APPEARANCE OF THE MANDINGOES—THEIR RELIGION—BELIEF IN AMULETS—A MANDINGO SONG—MARRIAGE AND CONDITION OF THE WOMEN—NATIVE COOKERY—A MANDINGO KING—INFLUENCE OF MAHOMETANISM.

BEFORE proceeding across the continent towards Abyssinia, we must briefly notice the Mandingo nation, who inhabit a very large tract of the country through which the Senegal and Gambia flow.

They are deserving of notice, if it were only on the ground that their language is more widely spread than any that is spoken in that part of Africa, and that any traveller who desires to dispense as far as possible with the native interpreters, who cannot translate literally if they would, and would not if they could, is forced to acquire the language before proceeding through the country. Fortunately it is a peculiarly melodious language, almost as soft as the Italian, nearly all the words ending in a vowel.

In appearance the Mandingoes are tall and well made, and have the woolly hair, though not the jetty skin and enormous lips, of the true negro. "The structure of the language," says Mr. M'Brair, who has made it his special study, "is thoroughly Eastern. In some of its grammatical forms it resembles the Hebrew and Syriac; its most peculiar sound is of the Malay family; its method of interrogation is similar to that of the Chinese, and in the composition of some verbs it is like the Persian. A few religious terms have been borrowed from the Arabic, and some articles of foreign manufacture are called after their European names."

As a rule, the religion of the Mandingoes is Mahometanism, modified to suit the people, but they still retain enough of the original negro character to have an intense faith in gregrees, which are made for them by the marabouts, or holy men, and almost invariably consist of sentences of the Koran, sewn up in little leathern cases beautifully tanned and stamped in patterns. Mahometanism has put an end to the noisy songs and dances which make night hideous; but the Mandingoes contrive, nevertheless, to indulge their taste for religious noise at night. Instead of singing profane songs they sing or intone the Koran, bawling the sacred sentences at the full stretch of their voices, and murdering sleep as effectually as if they had been still benighted idolaters singing praises in honour of the moon. Some ceremonies in honour of the moon still remain, but are quite harmless. When it appears, they salute it by spitting in their hands and waving them round their heads. For eclipses they account by saying that there is a large cat living somewhere in the sky, who puts her paw between the moon and the earth.

They are very strict Mahometans indeed, the marabouts always calling them to prayers one hour before sunrise; that, according to theological astronomy, being the time at which the sun rises at Mecca. Mahometanism has done much for the Mandingoes. It has substituted monotheism for idolatry, and totally abolished human sacrifices. It

has not extirpated the innate negro character of the Mandingoes; but it has raised them greatly in the scale of humanity. It has not cured them of lying and stealing—neither of which vices, by the way, are confined to idolaters; but it has brought them to abhor the system of child-selling, which is so ingrained in the ordinary negro, and a Mandingo Mahometan will not even sell a slave unless there is just cause of complaint against him.

The Rhamadan, or Mahometan fast, is rigidly observed by the Mandingoes, and it is no small proof of the power of their religious system that it has made a negro abstain from anything which he likes.

The principal rite of Mahometanism is of course practised by the Mandingoes, who have contrived to engraft upon it one of their own superstitions, namely, that if a lad remains uncircumcised, he is swallowed by a peripatetic demon, who carries him for nine days in his belly. This legend is religiously believed, and no one has yet been daring enough to put it to the test.

Fourteen years is the usual age for performing this ceremony, whole companies of lads partaking of it at the same time, and proceeding to the appointed spot, accompanied by their friends and relatives, who dance and sing songs by the way, neither of them being peculiarly delicate. Here the old negro nature shows itself again, proving the truth of the axiom that nature expelled with a pitchfork always comes back again. After the ceremony they pass a month in an intermediate state of existence. They have taken leave of their boyhood, and are not yet men. So until the expiration of the month they are allowed unlimited licence, but after that time they become men, and are ranked with their fathers. Even the girls undergo a ceremony of a somewhat similar character, the officiants being the wives of the marabouts.

As a natural consequence of this religion, which is a mixture of Mahometanism engrafted upon fetishism, the marabouts hold much the same exalted position as the fetish-men of the idolaters, and are the most important men of the community. They do not dress differently from the laity, but are distinguished by the colours of their caps, which are of some brilliant hue, such as red, blue, or yellow. The whole of education is in their hands, some being itinerant teachers, and others establishing regular schools. Others, again, mingle the characters of musicians and merchants, and all make the principal part of their living by the sale of amulets, which are nothing more than Mahometanized gregrees. So great is the demand for these amulets, that a wealthy man is sometimes absolutely inclosed in a leathern cuirass composed of nothing but amulets sewn up in their neat leathern cases.

One of the Mandingo songs, translated by Mr. W. Reade, shows clearly the opinion in which these men are held. "If you know how to write Marabout (*i.e.* Arabic, and not Mandingo), you will become one of the disciples of God. If you know Marabout, you are the greatest of your family. You maintain them. If they commit a fault, it is you who will protect them."

Another of these proverbial sayings expresses the uselessness of gregrees. "The Tubabs went against Galam. The King of Maiel said to a woman, 'Take your child, put it in a mortar, and pound it to dust. From its dust I will make a man rise who will save our town.'

"The woman pounded her child to dust. From the dust came a man; but the Tubabs took Maiel." The "Tubabs" are the French, and the saying evidently refers to the manufacture of a greegree similar in character to that which has been mentioned on page 676.

Still, their innate belief in the power of gregrees is too strong to be entirely eradicated; and if one of their chief men dies, they keep his death secret, and bury his body in a private spot, thinking that if an enemy could get possession of his blade-bone he would make a greegree with it, by means of which he could usurp the kingdom for himself.

Marriages are solemnized by the marabout, in the mosque, with an odd mixture of native and borrowed ceremonies. Next to the marabout the bridegroom's sister plays the most important part at the ceremony and in the future household; gives the article of clothing which takes the place of our wedding-ring, and which in this country would be

thought rather ominous,—namely, a pair of trousers and, if a child be born of the marriage, has the privilege of naming it. Polygamy is, of course, the rule, and each woman has her own house. So, when a girl is married, she stays with her parents until her own house is built, when she is conducted to it in great state by her young friends, who sing a mournful song deploring the loss of their companion.

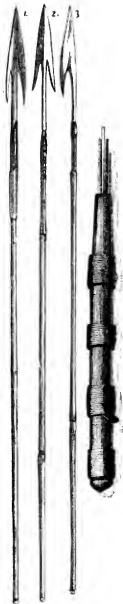
The women have every reason to be contented with their lot. They are not degraded slaves, like the married women in so many parts of Africa, and, if anything, have the upper hand of their husbands. "They are the most tyrannical wives in Africa," writes Mr. Reade. "They know how to make their husbands kneel before their charms, and how to place their little feet upon them. When they are threatened with divorce, they shed tears, and if a man repudiates his wife, they attack him *en masse*—they hate, but protect, each other.

"They go to this unfortunate husband, who has never felt or enjoyed a quiet moment in his own house, and say, 'Why do you ill-treat your wife? A woman is helpless; a man has all things. Go, recall her, and, to appease her just anger, make her a kind present.' The husband prays for forgiveness, and, when his entreaties take the form of a bullock or a slave, she consents to return."

The food of the Mandingoes is chiefly rice and milk, but when they are wealthy they indulge in many luxuries. The same author who has just been quoted gives the details of an entertainment cooked by half-bred Mandingoes. First they had oysters plucked from the branches of trees, to which they attached themselves at high water, and are left suspended when the floods recede. Then there were soles, carp, and mullet, all very bad, but very well cooked. "Then followed gazelle cutlets *à la papillote*; two small monkeys served cross-legged and with liver sauce, on toast; stewed iguana, which was much admired; a dish of roasted crocodiles' eggs; some slices of smoked elephant (from the interior), which none of us could touch; a few agreeable plates of fried locusts, land-crabs (previously fattened), and other crustaceæ; the breasts of a mermaid, or manatee, the grand *bonne-bouche* of the repast; some boiled alligator, which had a taste between pork and cod, with the addition of a musky flavour; and some hippopotamus' steaks—*aux pommes de terre*.

"We might have obtained a better dessert at Covent Garden, where we can see the bright side of the tropics without the trouble or expense of travelling. But we had pine-apples, oranges, roasted plantains, silver bananas, papaws (which, when made into a tart with cloves, might be taken for apples), and a variety of fruits which had long native names, curious shapes, and all of them very nasty tastes. The celebrated 'cabbage,' or topmost bud of the palm-tree, also formed part of the repast, and it is said to be the finest vegetable in the world. When stewed *en sauce blanche*, it is not to be compared with any vegetable of mortal growth. It must have been the ambrosia of the gods."

The Mandingoes who have not embraced Mahometanism are much inferior to their compatriots who have renounced their fetishism. Mr. Reade tells a ludicrous story of a



QUIVER AND ARROWS.
(From my collection.)

native "king," who was even dirtier than any of his subjects, and if possible was uglier, his face being devoid of intelligence and utterly brutish; he made long speeches in Mandingo, which, as usual with such speeches, were simply demands for everything he saw, and acted in a manner so consonant with his appearance, that he excited universal disgust, and remarks were made very freely on the disadvantages of being entirely in a savage state, and never having mixed with superior beings.

At last the tedious interpreting business was at an end, and nothing remained except the number of kola-nuts to be given as the present of friendship—a customary ceremony in this country. Six had been given, and the king made a long speech, which turned out to be a request for more. "Well, we can't very well refuse the dirty ruffian," said the visitor; "give him four more, that will make ten."

"*Make it twenty*," cried the king eagerly, forgetting that his *rôle* was to appear ignorant of English. He had lived for some years at Sierra Leone, and could speak English as well as any one when he chose, and had heard all the remarks upon his peculiar appearance without giving the least indication that he understood a word that was said.

One of the old superstitions which still holds its own against the advance of Mahometanism is one which belongs to an island on the Upper River. On this island there is a mountain, and on the mountain lives a spirit who has the unpleasant power of afflicting human beings so severely that they can never sit down for the rest of their lives. Therefore, on passing the hill, it is necessary to unclot the body from the waist downward, to turn the back to the mountain, and pray the spirit to have compassion on his votaries, and continue to them the privilege of sitting.

Every one is forced to undergo this ceremony, but fortunately the spirit is content if it be performed by deputy, and all travellers therefore, whether men or women, pay natives of their own sex to perform this interesting rite for them. However, like the well-known etiquette of crossing the line, this ceremony need only be performed on the first time of passing the hill, the spirit being satisfied with the tribute to his power.

The universal superstition respecting the power of human beings to change themselves into bestial shapes still reigns among the Mandingoes, and it is rather doubtful whether even the followers of Mohammed have shaken themselves quite free from the old belief. The crocodile is the animal whose form is most usually taken among the Mandingoes, and on one occasion a man who had been bitten by a crocodile, and narrowly escaped with his life, not only said that the reptile was a metamorphosed man, but even named the individual whom he knew himself to have offended a few days before the accident.

CHAPTER LXI.

THE BUBÉS AND CONGOESE.

REAL NAME OF THE BUBÉS—THEIR LIMITED RANOK—APPEARANCE AND MANNERS OF THE MEN—TOLA PASTE—REASONS FOR NUDITY—BUBÉ ARCHITECTURE—GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE BUBÉS—A WEDDING AT FERNANDO PO—CONGO—ITS GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION—CURIOUS TAXATION—RELIGION OF CONGO—THE CHITOMÈ AND HIS POWERS—HIS DEATH, AND LAW OF SUCCESSION—THE NOHOMBO AND HIS MODE OF WALKING—THE ORDEAL—CEREMONY OF CROWNING A KING—THE ROYAL ROBES—THE WOMEN OF CONGO—EARLY HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY—THE FEMALE MONARCH—THE FATE OF TEMBANDUMBA.

THE Bubé tribe (which unfortunately is pronounced Booby) is a really interesting one, and, but for the rapidly decreasing space, would be described in detail. The real name of the tribe is Adizah, but as they are in the habit of addressing others as Bubé, *i.e.* Man, the term has clung to them.

The Bubés inhabit Fernando Po, and, although some of them believe themselves to be aborigines of the island, have evidently come from the mainland. They have, however, no particular pride in their autoethonic origin, and, if questioned, are perfectly content to say that they came from their parents.

The Bubés inhabit only one zone in Fernando Po. The sea air is too soft and warm for them, and, besides, there is danger of being carried off by the slavers. More than three thousand feet above the sea they cannot exist, not because the climate is too cold, but because the palms and plantains on which they live will not flourish there. With the exception of those individuals who have come under the sway of the missionaries, the Bubés wear no clothes except closely-fitting coats of palm-oil, or, on grand occasions, of tola paste, *i.e.* palm oil bruised and mixed with the leaves of the tola herb. This paste has a powerful and very peculiar odour, and the first intimation of the vicinity of a Bubé village is usually the scent of the tola paste borne on the breeze.

The men wear large flat hats made of wicker-work covered with monkey-skin, and used chiefly to guard themselves from the tree-snake. The women are dressed in exactly the same fashion, but without the hat, their husbands perhaps thinking that women cannot be hurt by snakes. The hat is fastened to the head by skewers made of the bone of the monkey's leg, and the hair itself is plentifully greased and adorned with yellow ochre, and manipulated so that it looks as if it were covered with little gilded peas. Round the upper arm is tied a piece of string, which holds a knife for the man and a pipe for the woman. Clothing is to them a positive infliction, and Captain Burton remarks that, even at an elevation of ten thousand feet above the sea, he offered the Bubés blankets, but they would not have them, though they found the warmth of the fire acceptable to them.

They have a legend which explains their nudity. Many years ago a M'pongwe magician made fetish upon his great war spear, and killed numbers of them, so that they fled. They then made a law that the Bubé should wear no clothing until they had conquered the M'pongwe, and that law they have kept to the present day.

Taken as a savage, the Bubé is a wonderfully good specimen. He is very industrious, laying out yam fields and farms at some distance from his house, in order to prevent his domestic animals from straying into it, and he is the best palm-wine maker in Western Africa. He neither will be a slave himself, nor keep slaves, preferring to work for himself; and, after working hard at his farm, he will start off into the woods to shoot monkeys or squirrels. He is a good athlete, and handles his great staff with such address that he is a very formidable antagonist. He is an admirable linguist, picking up languages with astonishing readiness, and he is absolutely honest. "You may safely deposit rum and tobacco in his street, and he will pay his debt as surely as the Bank of England." This testimony is given by Captain Burton, who certainly cannot be accused of painting the native African in too bright colours.

Yet he never trusts any one. He will deal with you most honourably, but he will never tell you his name. If you present gifts to him, he takes them, but with suspicion: "Timet Danaos et dona ferentes." If you enter his village unexpectedly, he turns out armed, and, "if you are fond of collecting vocabularies, may the god of speech direct you." The fact is, he has been so cheated and plundered that he now suspects all men alike, and will not trust even his fellow-countrymen of the next village.

He treats his wife pretty well, but has an odd ascending series of punishments. Should he detect her in an infidelity, he boils a pot of oil, cuts off the offender's left hand, and plunges the stump into the oil to heal the bleeding. For the second offence she loses the right hand, and for the third the head, on which occasion the boiling oil is not required. Partly on account of this law, and partly on account of their ugliness, which is said to be portentous, the women display better morals than the generality of their African sisters.

Dr. Hutchinson, who resided in Fernando Po for some time, has not a very favourable opinion of the Bubés, thinking that the twenty or thirty thousand of their tribe form the greatest obstacle to civilization. He states, moreover, that, although the Baptist missionaries have been hard at work among them for seventeen years, they had not succeeded in Christianizing or civilizing, or even humanizing, a single Bubé.

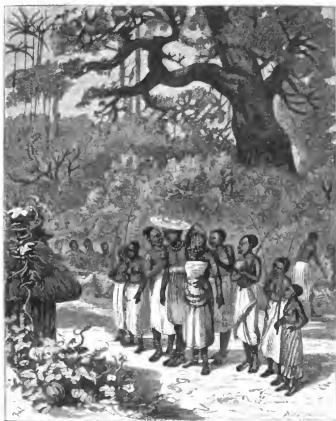
They are not an intellectual race, and do not appear to know or care much about the division of time, the new moon and the beginning of the dry season marking their monthly and annual epochs. The latter begins in November, and for two months the Bubés hold a festival called Lobo, in which marriages are generally celebrated. Dr. Hutchinson was able to witness a Bubé marriage, and has given a very amusing account of it. The bride was a daughter of the king. "On getting inside of the town our first object of attraction was the cooking going on in his Majesty's kitchen. Here a number of dead 'ipa' (porcupines) and 'litcha' (gazelles) were in readiness to be mingled up with palm-oil, and several grubs writhing on skewers, probably to add piquancy to the dishes. These are called 'inchaes,' being obtained from palm-trees, and look at first sight like Brobdignagian maggots. Instead of waiting to see the art of the Fernandian Soyer on these components, I congratulated myself on my ham sandwiches and brandy-and-water bottle safely stowed in my portmanteau, which one of the Kruuen carried on his back, and sat on my camp-stool beneath the grateful shade of a palm-tree to rest a while.

"Outside a small hut belonging to the mother of the bride-expectant, I soon recognised the happy bridegroom, undergoing his toilet from the hands of his future wife's sister. A profusion of tshibbu strings (i.e. small pieces of Achatectona shell, which represent the currency in Fernando Po) being fastened round his body, as well as his legs and arms, the anointing lady (having a short black pipe in her mouth) proceeded to putty him over with tola paste. He seemed not altogether joyous at the anticipation of his approaching happiness, but turned a sulky gaze now and then to a kidney-shaped piece of brown-painted yam, which he held in his hand, and which had a parrot's red feather fixed on its convex side. This I was informed was called 'ntsheba,' and is regarded as a protection against evil influence during the important day.

"Two skewer-looking hair-pins, with heads of red and white glass beads, fastened his hat (which was nothing more than a disk of bamboo plaiting) to the hair of his head; and his toilet being complete, he and one of the bridesmen, as elaborately dressed as

himself, attacked a mess of stewed flesh and palm-oil placed before them, as eagerly as if they had not tasted food for a fortnight. In discussing this meal they followed the primitive usage of 'fingers before forks,' only resting now and then to take a gulp of palm-wine out of a calabash which was hard by, or to wipe their hands on napkins of cocoa-leaf, a process which, to say the least of it, added nothing to their washerwoman's bill at the end of the week.

"But the bride! Here she comes! Led forth by her own and her husband-expectant's mother, each holding her by a hand, followed by two 'nepees' (professional singers) and half-a-dozen bridesmaids. Nothing short of a correct photograph could



A DUBÉ MARRIAGE

convey an idea of her appearance. Borne down by the weight of rings, wreaths, and girdles of 'tshibbu,' the tola pomatum gave her the appearance of an exhumed mummy, save her face, which was all white—not from excess of modesty (and here I may add, the negro race are expected always to blush blue), but from being smeared over with a white paste, symbolical of purity.

"As soon as she was outside the paling, her bridal attire was proceeded with, and the whole body was plastered over with white stuff. A veil of strings of tshibbu shells,

completely covering her face, and extending from the crown of her head to the chin, as well as on each side from ear to ear, was then thrown over her; over this was placed an enormous helmet made of cowhide; and any one with a spark of compassion in him could not help pitying that poor creature, standing for more than an hour under the broiling sun, with such a load on her, whilst the nepees were celebrating her praises in an extempore epithalamium, and the bridegroom was completing his finery elsewhere.

"Next came a long chant—musical people would call it a howl—by the chief nepee. It was about as long as 'Chevy Chase,' and celebrated the beauties and many virtues of the bride, among which was rather oddly mentioned the delicious smell which proceeded from her. At every pause in the chant the audience struck in with a chorus of 'Hee! hee! jee! eh!' and when it was over the ceremony proceeded.

"The candidates for marriage having taken their positions side by side in the open air, fronting the little house from which the bride-elect had been led out by the two mothers, and where I was informed she had been closely immured for fifteen months previous, the ceremony commenced. The mothers were the officiating priests—an institution of natural simplicity, whose homely origin no one will dare to impugn. On these occasions the mother-bishops are prophetically entitled 'boowanas,' the Fernandian for grandmother.

"Five bridesmaids marshalled themselves alongside the bride-postulant, each, in rotation, some inches lower than the other, the outside one being a mere infant in stature, and all having bunches of parrots' feathers on their heads, as well as holding a wand in their right hands. The mother stood behind the 'lappy pair,' and folded an arm of each round the body of the other—nepees chanting all the while, so that it was barely possible for my interpreter to catch the words by which they were formally soldered. A string of tshibbu was fastened round both arms by the bridegroom's mother; she, at the same time, whispering to him advice to take care of this tender lamb, even though he had half-a-dozen wives before. The string was then unloosed. It was again fastened on by the bride's mother, who whispered into her daughter's ear her duty to attend to her husband's farm, tilling his yams and cassava, and the necessity of her being faithful to him. The ratification of their promise to fulfil these conditions was effected by passing a goblet of palm-wine from mother to son (the bridegroom), from him to his bride, from her to her mother, each taking a sip as it went round.

"Then an indiscriminate dance and chant commenced; and the whole scene—the tola paste laid on some faces so thickly that one might imagine it was intended to affix something to them by means of it—the dangling musk-cat and monkey tails—the disk hats and parrots' feathers—the branches of wild fern and strings of tshibbu shells, fastened perhaps as nosegays to the ladies' persons—the white and red and yellow spots painted under the eyes, and on the shoulders, and in any place where they could form objects of attraction—the *tout ensemble*, contrasted with the lofty *Bombax*, beautiful palm, cocoa-nut, and other magnificent tropical trees around, presented a picture rarely witnessed by a European, and one calculated to excite varied reflections."

Lastly, the whole party—the tola paste now cracking from their bodies—proceeded to the house of the bridegroom, the old wives walking before the bride until they reached the door, and then allowing her to precede them. The newly-married pair then stood at their door facing the spectators, embracing each other as before. One of his children then presented the bride with a huge yam painted brown, others fixed tshibbu epaulets on her shoulders, the husband placed four rings on her fingers, and the ceremony was concluded by a second lecture from the bridegroom's mother, at the expiration of which Dr. Hutchinson, as he rather quaintly says, "left the happy pair to the enjoyment of their tola-moon."

CONGO.

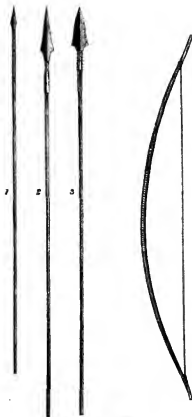
PASSING southward down the West Coast, we come to the celebrated kingdom of CONGO.

In these days it has been so traversed by merchants of different countries and missionaries of different sects, that it no longer presents the uniform aspect of its earlier monarchical days, of which we will take a brief survey. The reader must understand that the sources from which the information is taken are not wholly reliable, but, as we have none other, we must make the best of our information, and use our own discretion as to those parts which are best worthy of belief. The following account is mostly taken from Mr. Reade's condensation.

The ancient constitution of the Congo kingdom much resembled that of Ashanti or Dahome; namely, a despotic monarchy controlled by councillors, the king and the council being mutually jealous, and each trying to overreach the other. When the kingdom of Congo was first established, the royal revenues were much in the same condition as the civil list of a late Emperor of Russia—all belonged to the king, and he took as much as he wanted. In later days, however, the revenues were controlled by the council, who aided, not only in their disposal, but in the mode of their collection. The greater part of the income depended on the annual tributes of the inferior chiefs, but, as in times of pressure, especially during a protracted war, this tribute is inadequate to meet the expenses, the king and council devise various objects of taxation.

The most productive is perhaps the tax on beds, which are assessed according to their width, every span costing an annual payment of a slave. Now, as an ordinary man cannot sleep comfortably on a bed less than four spans in width, it is very evident that the tax must be a very productive one, if indeed it were not so oppressive as to cause a rebellion. The natives seem, however, to have quietly acquiesced in it, and a wealthy negro therefore takes a pride in having a very broad bed as a tangible proof of his importance.

As in more civilized nations, war is the great parent of taxation, the king being obliged to maintain a large standing army, and to keep it in good humour by constant largesses, for a large standing army is much like fire,—a useful servant, but a terrible master. The army is divided into regiments, each acting under the immediate command of the chief in whose district they live, and they are armed, in a most miscellaneous fashion, with any weapons they can procure. In these times the trade guns are the most



BOW AND ARROWS.

valued weapons, but the native swords, bows and arrows, spears, and knives, still form the staple of their equipment. As to uniform, they have no idea of it, and do not even distinguish the men of the different regiments, as do the Kaffirs of Southern Africa.

The ancient religion of the Congo negro is simply polytheism, which they have suffered to degenerate into fetishism. There is one monotheistic sect, but they have gained very little by their religion, which is in fact merely a negation of many deities, without the least understanding of the one whom they profess to worship—a deity to whom they attribute the worst vices that can degrade human nature.

The fetish-men or priests are as important here as the marabouts among the Mandingoes, and the chief of them, who goes by the name of Chitomè, is scarcely less honoured than the king, who finds himself obliged to seek the favour of this spiritual potentate, while the common people look on him as scarcely less than a god. He is maintained by a sort of tithe, consisting of the firstfruits of the harvest, which are brought to him with great ceremony, and are offered with solemn chants. The Congo-men fully believe that if they were to omit the firstfruits of one year's harvest, the next year would be an unproductive one.

A sacred fire burns continually in his house, and the embers, which are supposed to be possessed of great medicinal virtues, are sold by him at a high price, so that even his fire is a constant source of income to him. He has the entire regulation of the minor priests, and every now and then makes a progress among them to settle the disputes which continually spring up. As soon as he leaves his house, the husbands and wives throughout the kingdom are obliged to separate under pain of death. In case of disobedience, the man only is punished, and cases have been known where wives who disliked their husbands have accused them of breaking this strange law, and have thereby gained a double advantage, freed themselves from a man whom they did not like, and established a religious reputation on easy terms.

In fact, the Chitomè has things entirely his own way, with one exception. He is so holy that he cannot die a natural death, for if he did so the universe would immediately be dissolved. Consequently, as soon as he is seized with a dangerous illness, the Chitomè-elect calls at his house, and saves the universe by knocking out his brains with a club, or strangling him with a cord if he should prefer it. That his own death must be of a similar character has no effect upon the new Chitomè, who, true to the negro character, thinks only of the present time, and, so far as being anxious about the evils that will happen at some future time, does not trouble himself even about the next day.

Next to the Chitomè comes the Nghombo, a priest who is distinguished by his peculiar gait. His dignity would be impaired by walking like ordinary mortals, or even like the inferior priests, and so he always walks on his hands with his feet in the air, thereby striking awe into the laity. Some of the priests are rain-makers, who perform the duties of their office by building little mounds of earth and making fetish over them. From the centre of each charmed mound rises a strange insect, which mounts into the sky, and brings as much rain as the people have paid for. These priests are regularly instituted, but there are some who are born to the office, such as dwarves, hunchbacks, and albinos, all of whom are highly honoured as specially favoured individuals, consecrated to the priesthood by Nature herself.

The priests have, as usual, a system of ordeal, the commonest mode being the drinking of the poison cup, and the rarest the test of the red-hot iron, which is applied to the skin of the accused, and burns him if he be guilty. There is no doubt that the magicians are acquainted with some preparation which renders the skin proof against a brief application of hot iron, and that they previously apply it to an accused person who will pay for it.

The Chitomè has the privilege of conducting the coronation of a king. The new ruler proceeds to the house of the Chitomè, attended by a host of his future subjects, who utter piercing yells as he goes. Having reached the sacred house, he kneels before the door, and asks the Chitomè to be gracious to him. The Chitomè grows out a flat refusal from within. The king renews his supplications, in spite of repeated rebuffs, enumerating all the presents which he has brought to the Chitomè—which presents, by the way, are easily

made, as he will extort an equal amount from his subjects as soon as he is fairly installed.

At last, the door of the hut opens, and out comes the Chitomè in his white robe of office, his head covered with feathers, and a shining mirror on his breast. The king lies prostrate before the house, while the Chitomè pours water on him, scatters dust over him, and sets his feet on him. He then lies flat on the prostrate monarch, and in that position receives from him a promise to respect his authority ever afterwards. The king is then proclaimed, and retires to wash and change his clothes.

Presently he comes out of the palace, attended by his priests and nobles, and gorgeous in all the bravery of his new rank, his whole person covered with glittering ornaments of metal, glass, and stone, so that the eye can scarcely bear the rays that flash on every side



A CONGO CORONATION

as he moves in the sunbeams. He then seats himself, and makes a speech to the people. When it is finished, he rises, while all the people crouch to the ground, stretches his hands over them, and makes certain prescribed gestures, which are considered as the royal benediction. A long series of banquets and revelry ends the proceedings.

At the present day, the Congo king and great men disfigure themselves with European clothing, such as silk jackets, velvet shoes, damask coats, and broad-brimmed hats. But, in the former times, they dressed becomingly in native attire. A simple tunic made of very fine grass-cloth, and leaving the right arm bare, covered the upper part of the body, while a sort of petticoat, made of similar material, but dyed black, was tied round the waist, and an apron, or "sporrán," of leopard skin was fastened to the girdle and hung in front. On their heads they wore a sort of hood, and sometimes preferred a square red

and yellow cap. Sandals made of the palm-tree were the peculiar privilege of the king and nobles, the common people being obliged to go barefooted.

The wives in Congo are tolerably well off, except that they are severely beaten with the heavy hippopotamus-hide whip. The women do not resent this treatment, and indeed, unless a woman is soundly flogged occasionally, she thinks that her husband is neglecting her, and feels offended accordingly. The king has the power of taking any woman for his wife, whether married or not, and, when she goes to the royal harem, her husband is judiciously executed.

The people of Congo are—probably on account of the enervating climate—a very indolent and lethargic race, the women being made to do all the work, while the men lie in the shade and smoke their pipes and drink their palm-wine, which they make remarkably well, though not so well as the Bubé tribe of Fernando Po. Their houses are merely huts of the simplest description; a few posts with a roof over them, and twigs woven between them in wickerwork fashion by way of walls, are all that a Congo-man cares for in a house. His clothing is as simple as his lodging, a piece of native cloth tied round his middle being all that he cares for; so that the ample clothes and handsome furs worn by the king must have had a very strong effect on the almost naked populace.

According to traditional history, Congo was in old times one of the great African kingdoms. Twice it rose to this eminence, and both times by the energy of a woman, who, in spite of the low opinion in which women are held, contrived to ascend the throne.

Somewhere about 1520—it is impossible in such history to obtain precision of dates—a great chief, named Zimbo, swept over a very large part of Africa, taking every country to which he came, and establishing his own dominion in it. Among other kingdoms, Congo was taken by him, and rendered tributary, and so powerful did he at last become, that his army outgrew his territory, and he had the audacity to send a division to ravage Abyssinia and Mozambique. The division reached the eastern sea in safety, but the army then met the Portuguese, who routed them with great loss. Messengers conveyed the tidings to Zimbo, who put himself at the head of his remaining troops, went against the Portuguese, beat them, killed their general, and carried off a great number of prisoners, with whose skulls he paved the ground in front of his house.

In process of time he died, and the kingdom separated, after African fashion, into a number of independent provinces, each governed by one of the leaders of the now useless army. One of these leaders had a daughter named Tembandumba, who, together with her mother, ruled the province when her father died. These women always accompanied the troops in war, and so fierce and bloodthirsty was Tembandumba, even as a girl, that her mother gave her the command of half the troops, the natural consequence of which was that she took the command of the whole, deposed her mother, and made herself queen.

Her great ambition was to found a nation of Amazons. Licentiousness she permitted to the fullest extent, but marriage was utterly prohibited; and, as soon as the women found themselves tired of their male companions, the latter were killed and eaten, their places being supplied by prisoners of war. All male children were killed, and she had nearly succeeded in the object of her ambition, when she was poisoned by a young man with whom she fell violently in love, and from whom she imprudently accepted a bowl of wine at a banquet.

It is very remarkable that, about a hundred years after the death of Tembandumba, another female warrior took the kingdom. Her name was Shinga, and she obtained a power scarcely less than that of her predecessor. She, however, was wise in her generation, and, after she had fought the Portuguese, and been beaten by them, she concluded an humble peace, and retained her kingdom in safety.

CHAPTER LXII.

BORNU.

POSITION OF THE KINGDOM OF BORNU—APPEARANCE OF THE PEOPLE—MODE OF DRESSING THE HAIR—A RECEPTION BY THE SULTAN—COURT DRESS—THE SHEIKH OF BORNU—HIS PALACE AND ATTENDANTS—HIS NOBLE AND ENERGETIC CHARACTER—RECEPTION BY THE GUARDS—THEIR WEAPONS AND DISCIPLINE—THE KANEMBOO INFANTRY—JUSTICE OF THE SHEIKH—HIS POLICY AND TACT—REPUTED POWER OF CHARM-WRITING—HIS ZEAL FOR RELIGION—A TERRIBLE PUNISHMENT—BORNU ARCHITECTURE—CURIOUS MODES OF FISHING AND HUNTING—HABITS AND CUSTOMS OF THE KANEMBOOS.

ON the western side of Lake Tchad, between 10° and 15° N. and 12° and 18° E., is situated the large kingdom of Bornu, which embraces a considerable number of tribes, and is of sufficient importance to demand a notice. There are about twelve or thirteen great cities in Bornu, and at least ten different dialects are spoken in the country, some having been due to the presence of the Shooas, who themselves speak nearly pure Arabic.

The pure Bornu people, or Kanowry, as they call themselves, are not handsome, having large, flat, and rather unmeaning faces, with flattish noses, and large mouths. The lips, however, are not those of the negro, and the forehead is high, betokening a greater amount of intellect than falls to the lot of the real negro.

As a rule, the Bornuese are not a wealthy people, and they are but indifferently clad, wearing a kind of shirt stained of an indigo blue by themselves, and, if they are tolerably well off, wearing two or even three such garments, according to their means. The head is kept closely shaven, and the better class wear a cap of dark blue, the scarlet caps being appropriated to the sultan and his court. When they walk they always carry a heavy stick with an enormous knob at the top, like a drum-major's bâton, and march much after the manner of that important functionary.

The women are remarkable for the mode in which they dress their hair. It is divided into three longitudinal rolls, thick in the middle and diminishing towards the ends. One of these rolls passes over the top of the head, and the others lie over the ears, the three points uniting on the forehead, and being held firmly in their places by a thick plastering of beeswax and iudigo. The other ends of the rolls are plaited very finely, and then turned up like the curled feathers of a drake's tail.

Sometimes a slight variation is made in the hair, five rolls being used instead of three. The women are so fond of indigo that they dye their eyebrows, hands, arms, feet, and legs with it, using the ruddy heuna for the palms of the hands and the nails of the toes and fingers, and black antimony for the eyelashes. Beads, bracelets, and other ornaments are profusely worn, mostly of horn or brass. Silver and ivory mark the woman of rank. The dress is primarily composed of a sort of blue, white, or striped sheet called *toorkadee*, which is wrapped round the body under the arms, and falls as low as the knees. This is the usual costume, but if a woman be well off, she adds a second *toorkadee*, which she wears like a mantilla, over her head and shoulders.

Like other African tribes, though they belong to the Mahometan religion, they use the tattoo profusely. Twenty cuts are made on each side of the face, converging in the corners of the mouth, from the angle of the lower jaw and the cheek-bones, while a single cut runs down the centre of the forehead. Six cuts are made on each arm, six more on the thighs, and the same number on the legs, while four are on each breast, and nine on each side just above the hip-bone. These are made while they are infants, and the poor little things undergo frightful torments, not only from the pain of the wounds, but from the countless flies which settle on the hundred and three cuts with which their bodies are marked.

The Bornuese are governed, at least nominally, by a head chief or sultan, who holds his court with most quaint ceremony. When the travellers Denham and Clapperton went to pay their respects to him, they were visited on the previous evening by one of the royal chamberlains, who displayed the enormous staff, like a drum-major's bâton, wore eight or ten shirts in order to exhibit his wealth, and had on his head a turban of huge dimensions. By his orders a tent was pitched for the white visitors, and around it was drawn a linen screen, which had the double effect of keeping out the sun and the people, and of admitting the air. A royal banquet, consisting of seventy or eighty dishes, was sent for their refecton, each dish large enough to suffice for six persons, and, lest the white men should not like the native cookery, the sultan, with much thoughtfulness, sent also a number of live fowls, which they might cook for themselves.

Next morning, soon after daylight, they were summoned to attend the sultan, who was sitting in a sort of cage, as if he had been a wild beast. No one was allowed to come within a considerable distance, and the etiquette of the court was, that each person rode on horseback past the cage, and then dismounted and prostrated himself before the sultan. The oddest part of the ceremony is, that as soon as the courtier has made his obeisance, he seats himself on the ground with his *back* towards his monarch. Nearly three hundred of the courtiers thus take their places, and nothing could be more ludicrous than the appearance which they presented, their bodies being puffed out by successive robes, their heads swathed in turbans of the most preposterous size, and their thin legs, appearing under the voluminous garments, showing that the size of the head and body was merely artificial.

In fact, the whole business is a sham, the sultan being the chief sham, and the others matching their sovereign. The sultan has no real authority, the true power being lodged in the hands of the sheikh, who commands the army. Those who serve the court of Bornu are, by ancient etiquette, obliged to have very large heads and stomachs, and, as such gifts of nature are not very common, an artificial enlargement of both regions is held to be a sufficient compliance with custom.

Consequently, the courtiers pad themselves with wadding to such an extent that as they sit on horseback their abdomens seem to protrude over the pommel of the saddle, while the eight or ten shirts which they wear, one over the other, aid in exaggerating the outline, and reducing the human body to a shapeless lump.

Their heads are treated in a similar fashion, being enveloped in great folds of linen or muslin of different colours, white, however, predominating; and those who are most careful in their dress fold their huge turbans so as to make their heads appear to be one-sided, and as unlike their original shape as possible. Besides all these robes and shirts and padding, they wear a vast number of charms, made up in red leather parcels, and hung all over the body. The sultan is always accompanied by his trumpeters, who blow hideous blasts on long wooden trumpets called *frum-frums*, and also by his dwarves, and other grotesque favourites.

In war, as in peace, the sultan is nominally the commander, and in reality a mere nonentity. He accompanies the sheikh, but never gives orders, nor even carries arms, active fighting being supposed to be below his dignity. One of the sultans lost his life in consequence of this rule. According to custom he had accompanied the sheikh in a war against the great enemy of Bornu, the Sultan of Begharmi, and, contrary to the usual result of these battles, the engagement had gone against him, and he was obliged to take refuge in flight. Unfortunately for him, he was qualified by nature for royalty, being

arge-bodied and of enormous weight, so that his horse could not carry him fast enough. He fled to Angala, one of his chief towns, and if he could have entered it would have been safe. Unfortunately, his enormous weight had distressed his horse so much that he animal suddenly stopped close to the gate, and could not be induced to stir.

The sultan, true to the principle of *noblesse oblige*, accepted the position at once. He dismounted from his horse, wrapped his face in the shawl which covered his head, seated himself under a tree, and died as became his rank. Twelve of his attendants refused to leave their master, and nobly shared his death.

Around the sultan are his inevitable musicians, continually blowing their frum-frums or trumpets, which are sometimes ten or twelve feet in length, and in front goes his ensign, bearing his standard, which is a long pole hung round at the top with strips of coloured leather and silk. At either side are two officers, carrying enormous spears, with which they are supposed to defend their monarch. This, however, is as much a sham as the rest of the proceedings; for, in the first place, the spearmen are so fat and their weapons so unwieldy that they could not do the least execution, and, as if to render the spears still more harmless, they are covered with charms from the head to the butt.

It has been mentioned that the real power of Bornu rests, not with the sultan, but with the sheikh. This potentate was found to be of simple personal habits, yet surrounded with state equal to that of the sultan, though differing in degree. Dressed in a plain blue robe and a shawl turban, he preferred to sit quietly in a small and dark room, attended by two of his favourite negroes armed with pistols, and having a brace of pistols lying on a carpet in front of him.

But the approaches to this chamber were rigorously guarded. Sentinels stood at the gate, and intercepted those who wished to enter, and would not allow them to mount the staircase which led to the sheikh's apartment until they were satisfied. At the top of the staircase were negro guards armed with spears, which they crossed in front of the visitor, and again questioned him. Then the passages leading to the sheikh's chamber were lined with rows of squatting attendants, who snatched off the slippers of the visitors, and continually impeded their progress by seizing their ankles, lest they should infringe etiquette by walking too fast. Indeed, had not the passages been densely crowded, the guests would have been several times flung on their faces by the zeal of these courtiers.

At last they gained admission, and found this dread potentate a singularly quiet and unassuming man, well-disposed towards the travellers, and very grateful to them for the double-barrelled gun and pistols which they presented to him. In return, he fed them liberally, sending them fish by the camel-load, and other provisions in like quantity.

According to his warlike disposition, his conversation chiefly turned on military affairs, and especially on the best mode of attacking walled towns. The account of breaching batteries had a great effect upon him, and the exhibition of a couple of rockets confirmed him in his respect for the wisdom of the English. Being a thoughtful man, he asked to see some rockets fired, because there were in the town a number of the hostile Shooas. The rockets were fired accordingly, and had the desired effect, frightening not only the Shooas, but all the inhabitants of the town, out of their senses, and even the steady nerves of the sheikh himself were much shaken.

The sheikh was a great disciplinarian, and managed his wild cavalry with singular skill, as is shown by the account of Major Denham. "Our accounts had been so contradictory of the state of the country that no opinion could be formed as to the real condition and the number of its inhabitants. We had been told that the sheikh's soldiers were a few ragged negroes armed with spears, who lived upon the plunder of the black Kaffir countries by which he was surrounded, and which he was able to subdue by the assistance of a few Arabs who were in his service; and, again, we had been assured that his forces were not only numerous, but to a degree regularly trained. The degree of credit which might be attached to these reports was nearly balanced in the scales of probability, and we advanced towards the town of Kouka in a most interesting state of uncertainty whether we should find its chief at the head of thousands, or be received by him under a tree, surrounded by a few naked slaves.

"These doubts, however, were quickly removed. I had ridden on a short distance in

front of Boo-Khaloom, with his train of Arabs all mounted and dressed out in their best apparel; and, from the thickness of the trees, now lost sight of them. Fancying that the road could not be mistaken I rode still onwards, and, approaching a spot less thickly planted, was surprised to see in front of me a body of several thousand cavalry drawn up in line, and extending right and left as far as I could see, and checking my horse I awaited the arrival of my party under the shade of a wide-spreading acacia. The Bornu troops remained quite steady, without noise or confusion; and a few horsemen, who were moving about in front, giving directions, were the only persons out of the ranks.



BODY GUARD OF THE SHEIKH OF BORNU.

"On the Arabs appearing in sight, a shout or yell was given by the sheikh's people, which rent the air; a blast was blown from their rude instruments of music equally loud, and they moved on to meet Boo-Khaloom and his Arabs. There was an appearance of tact and management in their movements which astonished me. Three separate bodies from the centre of each flank kept charging rapidly towards us, within a few feet of our horses' heads, without checking the speed of their own until the moment of their halt, while the whole body moved onwards.

"These parties were mounted on small but very perfect horses, who stopped and wheeled from their utmost speed with the greatest precision and expertness, shaking their spears over their heads, and exclaiming, 'Blessing! blessing! Sons of your country! Sons of your country!' and returning quickly to the front of the body in order to repeat the charge. While all this was going on, they closed in their right and left flanks, and surrounded the little body of Arabs so completely as to give the compliment of welcoming them very much the appearance of a declaration of their contempt for their weakness.

"I was quite sure this was premeditated; we were all so closely pressed as to be nearly smothered, and in some danger from the crowding of the horses and clashing of the spears. Moving on was impossible, and we therefore came to a full stop. Our chief was much enraged, but it was all to no purpose: he was only answered by shrieks of 'Welcome!' and spears most unpleasantly rattled over our heads expressive of the same feeling.

"This annoyance was not, however, of long duration. Barca Gana, the sheikh's first general, a negro of noble aspect, clothed in a figured silk robe, and mounted upon a beautiful Mandara horse, made his appearance, and after a little delay the rear was cleared of those who had pressed in upon us, and we moved forward, although but very slowly, from the frequent impediments thrown in our way by these wild warriors.

"The sheikh's negroes, as they were called, meaning the black chiefs and generals, all raised to that rank by some deed of bravery, were habited in coats of mail composed of iron chain, which covered them from the throat to the knees, dividing behind, and coming on each side of the horse. Some of them had helmets, or rather skull-caps, of the same metal, with chin-pieces, all sufficiently strong to ward off the shock of a spear. Their horses' heads were also defended by plates of iron, brass, and silver, just leaving sufficient room for the eyes of the animal."

In the illustration on page 692 are seen some of this picturesque force. In my collection there is one of the remarkable spears carried by these horsemen. In total length it is nearly six feet long, of which the long, slender, leaf-like blade occupies twenty inches. The shaft is five-eighths of an inch in diameter at the thickest part, but diminishes towards the head and butt. The material of the shaft is some hard, dark wood, which takes a high polish, and is of a rich brown colour. The head is secured to the shaft by means of a rather long socket, and at the butt there is a sort of iron spud, also furnished with a socket, so that the length of the wooden portion of the spear is only thirty-two inches. It is a light, well-balanced, and apparently serviceable weapon. The shaft, as represented in the illustration, is too thick, and the head is scarcely long enough.

Beside these weapons, there are several others, offensive and defensive. The chiefs wear a really well-formed cuirass made of iron plates, and having an ingenious addition of a kind of steel upright collar attached to the back-piece of the cuirass, and protecting the nape of the neck. The cuirass is made of five plates of steel, laid horizontally and riveted to each other, and of as many similar plates attached to them perpendicularly, and forming the back-piece and shoulder-straps. It is made to open at one side to admit of being put on and off, and the two halves are kept together by loops and links, which take the place of straps and buckles.

The chief's horses are also distinguished by the quantity of armour with which they are protected, an iron chamfron covering the whole of the forehead, and extending as far as the nostrils.

By the saddle-bow hangs a battle-axe, shaped exactly like those axes with which we have been so familiar in Southern and Central Africa, but being distinguished from them by the fact that an iron chain is passed through a hole in that part of the head which passes through the knob at the end of the handle, the other end of the chain being attached to a ring that slides freely up and down the handle. This arrangement enables the warrior to secure and replace the head of the axe if it should be struck out of the handle in the heat of battle. A long double-edged dagger, shaped almost exactly like the spear-head, is fastened to the left arm by a strap, and is carried with the hilt downwards.

The infantry carry, together with other weapons, an iron axe, shaped like a sickle, and closely resembling the weapon which has been mentioned as used by the Neam-Nam and Fan tribes. This is called the "hunga-munga," and is used for throwing at a retreating enemy.

The infantry, of which mention has just been made, are mostly Kanemboo negroes. They are a tall, muscular race, and, being also courageous, have well deserved the estimation in which they are held by their master.

Unlike the horsemen, they are almost completely naked, their only clothing being a rather fantastical belt, or "sporran," of goat-skin, with the hair still remaining on the skin, and a few strips of cloth, called "gubkas," tied round their heads, and brought

under the nose. These gubkas are the currency of the country, so that a soldier carries his wealth on his head.

Their principal weapons are the spear and shield. The former is a very horrible weapon, seven feet or so in length, and armed just below the head with a number of hook-shaped barbs, almost exactly like those attached to the arrow No. 6 on page 494. The shield is made from the wood of the fogo, a tree which grows in the shallow waters of Lake Tchad, and which is so light that, although the shield is large enough to protect the whole body and upper part of the legs, it only weighs a few pounds. The pieces of wood of which it is made are bound together by strips of raw bullock's hide, on which the hair is suffered to remain as an ornament, and which, after doing their duty, are carried along the outer edge of the shield in a vandyked pattern. The shield is slightly convex. Beside the spear and shield, the Kanemboo soldier mostly carries on his left arm a dagger like that which has already been described, but not so neatly made. The Kanemboos will be presently described.

At least nine thousand of these black soldiers are under the command of the sheikh, and are divided into regiments of a thousand or so strong. It may be imagined that they are really formidable troops, especially under the command of

such a leader, who, as will be seen by Major Denham's description of a review, had introduced strict discipline and a rough-and-ready sort of tactics. The sheikh had ordered out the Kanemboo soldiers, and galloped towards them on his favourite horse, accompanied by four sultans who were under his command. His staff were gaily adorned with scarlet berouses decorated with gold lace, while he himself preserved his usual simplicity of dress, his robes being white, and a Cashmere shawl forming his turban.

As soon as he gave the signal, the Kanemboos raised a deafening shout, and began their manoeuvres, their officers being distinguished by wearing a dark blue robe and turban.

"On nearing the spot where the sheikh had placed himself, they quickened their pace,



KANEMBOO MAN AND WOMAN.

and after striking their spears against their shields for some minutes, which had an extremely grand and stunning effect, they filed off to the outside of the circle, where they again formed and awaited their companions, who succeeded them in the same order. There appeared to be a great deal of affection between these troops and the sheikh. He spurred his horse onwards into the midst of some of the tribes as they came up, and spoke to them, while the men crowded round him, kissing his feet and the stirrups of his saddle. It was a most pleasing sight. He seemed to feel how much his present elevation was owing to their exertions, while they displayed a devotion and attachment deserving and denoting the greatest confidence.

"I confess I was considerably disappointed at not seeing these troops engage, although more than compensated by the reflection of the slaughter that had been prevented by that disappointment."

It seems rather curious that this leader, so military in all his thoughts, should take women with him into the field, especially when he had to fight against the terrible Munga archers, whose poisoned arrows are certain death to all who are wounded by them. Yet, whenever he takes the field, he is accompanied by three of his favourite wives, who are mounted on trained horses, each being led by a boy, and their whole figures and faces so wrapped in their wide robes that the human form is scarcely distinguishable. The sultan, as becomes his superior rank, takes with him an unlimited number of wives, accompanied by a small court of palace officers. Nine, however, is the usual number allotted to the sultan, and there are nearly a hundred non-combatants to wait upon them.

The army, well ordered as it is, shows little signs of its discipline until it is near the enemy, the troops marching much as they like, and beguiling the journey with songs and tales. As soon, however, as they come within dangerous ground, the sheikh gives the word, and they all fall into their places, and become steady and well-disciplined troops.

The sheikh's place is one of no ordinary peril, for, beside having the responsibility of command, and the practical care of the sultan's unwieldy person, he is the object at which the enemy all aim, knowing well that, if they can only kill the sheikh, their victory is assured. This particular sheikh entirely disregarded all notion of personal danger, and was the most conspicuous personage in the army. He marches in front of his soldiers, and before him are borne five flags—two green, two striped, and one red—upon which are written in letters of gold extracts from the Koran. Behind him rides his favourite attendant, bearing his master's shield, mail coat, and helmet, and beside him is the bearer of his drum, which is considered as almost equivalent to himself in value. The Begharmis say of this sheikh, that it is useless to attack him, because he has the power of rendering himself invisible; and that on one occasion, when they routed his army, and pursued the sheikh himself, they could not see either him or his drum, though the instrument was continually sounding.

Before passing to another branch of this subject, we will finish our account of this sheikh. His name was Alameen Ben Mohammed el Kanemy, and, according to Major Denham's portrait, he was a man of mark, his boldly-cut features expressing his energetic character even under the folds of the turban and robe in which he habitually enveloped himself. Being the virtual ruler of the kingdom, he administered justice as well as waged war, and did so with stern impartiality.

On one occasion, when a slave had offended against the law, and was condemned to death, his master petitioned the sheikh against the capital punishment, saying that, as the slave was his property, the real punishment fell upon him, who was not even cognizant of his slave's offence. The sheikh admitted the validity of the plea, but said that public justice could not be expected to yield to private interests. So he ordered the delinquent for execution, but paid his price to the owner out of his own purse.

He was equally judicious in enforcing his own authority. His favourite officer was Barca Gana, who has already been mentioned. El Kanemy had an especial liking for this man, and had committed to his care the government of six districts, besides enriching him with numbers of slaves, horses, and other valuable property. It happened that on one occasion El Kanemy had sent him a horse which he had inadvertently promised to another person, and which, accordingly, Barca Gana had to give up. Being enraged by

this proceeding, he sent back to the sheikh all the horses which he had presented, saying that in future he would ride his own animals.

El Kanemy was not a man to suffer such an insolent message to be given with impunity. He sent for Barca Gana, stripped him on the spot of all his gorgeous clothing, substituted the slave's leathern girdle for his robes, and ordered him to be sold as a slave to the Tibboos.

Humbled to the dust, the disgraced general acknowledged the justice of the sentence, and only begged that his master's displeasure might not fall on his wives and children. Next day, as Barca Gana was about to be led away to the Tibboos, the negro body-guards, who seem to have respected their general for his courage in spite of his haughty and somewhat overbearing manner, came before the sheikh, and begged him to pardon their commander. Just at that moment the disgraced chief came before his offended master, to take leave before going off with the Tibboos to whom he had been sold.

El Kanemy was quite overcome by the sight, flung himself back on his carpet, wept like a child, allowed Barca Gana to embrace his knees, and gave his free pardon. "In the evening there was great and general rejoicing. The timbrels beat, the Kanemboos yelled and struck their shields; everything bespoke joy, and Barca Gana, in new robes and a rich burnouse, rode round the camp, followed by all the chiefs of the army."

Even in war, El Kanemy permitted policy and tact to overcome the national feeling of revenge. For example, the formidable Munga tribe, of whom we shall presently treat, had proved themselves exceedingly troublesome, and the sheikh threatened to exterminate them—a threat which he could certainly have carried out, though with much loss of life. He did not, however, intend to fulfil the threat, but tried, by working on their fears and their interests, to conciliate them, and to make them his allies rather than his foes. He did not only frighten them by his splendidly-appointed troops, but awed them by his accomplishments as a writer, copying out a vast number of charmed sentences for three successive nights. The illiterate Mungas thought that such a proceeding was a proof of supernatural power, and yielded to his wisdom what they would not have yielded to his veritable power. They said it was needless to fight against a man who had such terrible powers. Night after night, as he wrote the potent words, their arrows were blunted in their quivers. Their spears snapped asunder, and their weapons were removed out of their huts, so that some of the chiefs absolutely became ill with terror, and all agreed that they had better conclude peace at once. The performance of Major Denham's rockets had also reached their ears, and had added much to the general consternation.

He carried his zeal for religion to the extreme of fanaticism, constituting himself the guardian of public morals, and visiting offences with the severest penalties. He was especially hard on the women, over whom he kept a vigilant watch by means of his spies. On one occasion, two young girls of seventeen were found guilty, and condemned to be hanged. Great remonstrances were made. The lover of one of the girls, who had previously offered to marry her, threatened to kill any one who placed a rope round her neck, and a general excitement pervaded the place. For a long time the sheikh remained inexorable, but at last compounded the affair by having their heads shaved publicly in the market-place—a disgrace scarcely less endurable than death.

On another occasion the delinquents had exaggerated their offence by committing it during the fast of the Rhamadan. The man was sentenced to four hundred stripes, and the woman to half that number. The punishment was immediate. The woman was stripped of her ornaments and all her garments, except a cloth round the middle, and her head shaved. She was then suspended by the cloth, and the punishment inflicted.

Her partner was treated far worse. The whip was a terrible weapon, made of the skin of the hippopotamus, and having a metal knob on the end. Each blow was struck on the back, so that the lash curled round the body, and the heavy knob came with terrible violence on the breast and stomach. Before half the lashes were inflicted, blood flowed profusely from his mouth, and, a short time after the culprit was taken down, he was dead. Strange to say, he acknowledged the justice of the sentence, kissed the weapon, joined in the profession of faith which was said before the punishment began, and never uttered a cry.

Fierce in war, and, as we have seen, a savage fanatic in religion, the sheikh was no

stranger to the softer emotions. Major Denham showed him a curious musical snuff-box, the sweetness of which entranced him. He sat with his head in his hands, as if in a dream; and when one of his courtiers spoke, he struck the man a violent blow for interrupting the sweet sounds.

His punishment for theft was usually a severe flogging and a heavy fine. But, in cases of a first offence of a young delinquent, the offender was buried in the ground up to his shoulders, and his head and neck smeared with honey. The swarms of flies that settled on the poor wretch's head made his existence miserable during the time that he was thus buried, and no one who had undergone such a punishment once would be likely to run the risk of suffering it again, even though it did no permanent injury, like the whip. Beheading is also a punishment reserved for Mahometans, while "Kafirs" are either impaled or crucified, sometimes living for several days in torments.

The slaves of the Bornuese are treated with great kindness, and are almost considered as belonging to their master's family, their condition being very like that of the slaves or servants, as they are called, of the patriarchal ages. Much of the marketing is done by female slaves, who take to market whole strings of oxen laden with goods or cowries, and conduct the transaction with perfect honesty. The market, by the way, in which these women buy and sell, is really a remarkable place. It is regulated in the strictest manner, and is divided into districts, in each of which different articles are sold. It is governed by a sheikh, who regulates all the prices, and gets his living by a small commission of about a half per cent. on every purchase that exceeds four dollars. He is aided by *dylalas*, or brokers, who write their private mark inside every parcel.

The whole place is filled with rows of stalls, in which are to be found everything that a Bornuese can want, and one great convenience of the place is, that a parcel need never be examined in order to discover whether any fraud has been perpetrated. Should a parcel, when opened at home, be defective, the buyer sends it back to the *dylala*, who is bound to find out the seller, and to force him to take back the parcel and refund the money. As an example of the strange things which are sold in this market, Major Denham mentions that a young lion was offered to him. It was perfectly tame, and was led about by a cord round his neck, walking among the people without displaying any ferocity. Tame lions seem to be fashionable in Bornu, as the sheikh afterwards sent Major Denham another lion equally tame.

The architecture of the Bornuese is superior to that of Dahome. "The towns," writes Major Denham, "are generally large, and well built: they have walls thirty-five and forty feet in height, and nearly twenty feet in thickness. They have four entrances, with three gates to each, made of solid planks eight or ten inches thick, and fastened together with heavy clamps of iron. The houses consist of several courtyards between four walls, with apartments leading out of them for slaves, then a passage and an inner court leading into habitations of the different wives, which have each a square space to themselves, enclosed by walls, and a handsome thatched hut. From thence also you ascend a wide staircase of five or six steps, leading to the apartments of the owner, which consist of two buildings like towers or turrets, with a terrace of communication between them, looking into the street, with a castellated window. The walls are made of reddish clay, as smooth as stones, and the roofs are most tastefully arched on the inside with branches, and thatched on the outside with a grass known in Bombay by the name of *lidther*.

"The horns of the gazelle and antelope serve as a substitute for nails or pegs. These are fixed in different parts of the walls, and on them hang the quivers, bows, spears, and shields of the chief. A man of consequence will sometimes have four of these terraces and eight turrets, forming the faces of his mansion or domain, with all the apartments of his women within the space below. Horses and other animals are usually allowed an enclosure near one of the courtyards forming the entrance."

Such houses as these belong only to the wealthy, and those of the poor are of a much simpler description, being built of straw, reeds, or mats, the latter being the favourite material.

As is mostly the case in polygamous Africa, each wife has her own special house, or

rather hut, which is usually of the kind called "coosie," *i.e.* one that is built entirely of sticks and straw. The wives are obliged to be very humble in presence of their husbands, whom they always approach on their knees, and they are not allowed to speak to any of the male sex except kneeling, and with their heads and faces covered. Marriage is later in Bornu than in many parts of Africa, the girls scarcely ever marrying until they are full fifteen, and mostly being a year or two older.

Weddings are conducted in a ceremonious and noisy manner. The bride is perched on the back of an ox, and rides to the bridegroom's house attended by her mother and friends, and followed by other oxen carrying her dowry, which mostly consists of *toorkadees* and other raiment. All her male friends are mounted, and dash up to her at full gallop, this being the recognised salute on such occasions. The bridegroom is in the meantime parading the streets with a shouting mob after him, or sitting in his house with the same shouting mob in front of him, yelling out vociferous congratulations, blowing horns, beating drums, and, in fact, letting their African nature have its full sway.

In this country, the people have a very ingenious method of counteracting the effects of the rain-storms, which come on suddenly, discharge the water as if it were poured from buckets, and then pass on. On account of the high temperature, the rain soon evaporates, so that even after one of these showers, though the surface of the ground is for the time converted into a marsh intersected with rivulets of running water, the sandy ground is quite dry at the depth of two feet or so.

As soon as the Bornuese perceive one of these storms approaching, they take off all their clothes, dig holes in the ground, bury the clothes, and cover them up carefully. The rain falls, and is simply a shower-bath over their naked bodies, and, as soon as the storm has passed over, they reopen the hole, and put on their dry clothes. When they are preparing a resting-place at night, they take a similar precaution, digging deep holes until they come to the dry sand, on which they make their beds.

THE KANEMBOOS.

If the reader will refer to the illustration on page 694, he will see that by the side of the Kanemboo warrior is his wife. The women are, like their husbands, dark and well-shaped. They are lively and brisk in their manners, and seem always ready for a laugh. Their clothing is nearly as limited as that of their husbands, but they take great pains in plaiting their hair into numerous little strings, which reach as far as the neck. The head is generally ornamented with a flat piece of tin or silver hanging from the hair. This custom is prevalent throughout the kingdom, and, indeed, the principal mode of detecting the particular tribe to which a woman belongs is to note the colour and pattern of her scanty dress. Most of the Kanemboo women have a string of brass beads or of silver rings hanging upon each side of the face. In the latter case they mostly have also a flat circular piece of silver on their foreheads.

The architecture of the Kanemboos is very similar to that of the Kaffirs of Southern Africa, the huts more resembling those of the Bechuanas than the Zulu, Kosa, or Ponda tribes. They are compared to haystacks in appearance, and are made of reeds. Each house is situated in a neat enclosure made of the same reed, within which a goat or two, a cow, and some fowls are usually kept. The hut is divided into two portions, one being for the master and the other for the women. His bed is supported on a wooden framework and covered with the skins of wild animals. There is no window, and the place of a door is taken by a mat.

In this country, they subsist generally on fish, which they obtain from the great Lake Tchad in a very ingenious manner. The fisherman takes two large gourds, and connects them with a stout bamboo, just long enough to allow his body to pass easily between

them. He then takes his nets, to the upper part of which are fastened floats made of cane, and to the lower edge are attached simple weights of sand tied up in leathern bags.

He launches the gourds, and, as he does so, sits astride the bamboo, so that one gourd is in front of him and the other behind. Having shot his nets, he makes a circuit round them, splashing the water so as to drive the fish against the meshes. When he thinks that a sufficiency of fish has got into his net, he draws it up gently with one hand, while the other hand holds a short club, with which he kills each fish as its head is lifted above the water. The dead fish is then disengaged from the net, and flung into one of the gourds; and when they are so full that they can hold no more without running the risk of admitting water, the fisherman paddles to shore, lands his cargo, and goes off for another haul. He has no paddles but his hands, but they are efficient instruments, and propel him quite as fast as he cares to go.



FISHING SCENE

The women have a very ingenious mode of catching fish, constituting themselves into a sort of net. Thirty or forty at a time go into the water, and wade up to their breasts. They then form in single file, and move gradually towards the muddy shore, which slopes very gradually, stamping and beating the water so as to make as much disturbance as possible. The terrified fishes retire before this formidable line, and at last are forced into water so shallow, that they can be scooped out by the hands and flung ashore.

The fish are cooked in a very simple manner. A fire is lighted; and when it has burnt up properly, each fish has a stick thrust down its throat. The other end of the stick is fixed into the ground close to the fire, and in a short time the fire is surrounded with a circle of fish, all with their heads downwards and their tails in the air as if they were diving. They can be easily turned on the sticks, the tail affording an excellent leverage, and in a very short time they are thoroughly roasted.

The Kanemboos catch the large animals in pitfalls called "blaquas." These blaquas are laboriously and ingeniously made, and are often used to protect towns against the Tuaricks and other invaders, as well as to catch wild animals. The pits are very deep, and at the bottom are fixed six or seven perpendicular stakes, with sharpened points, and hardened by being partially charred. So formidable are they, that a Tuarick horse and his rider have been known to fall into one of them, and both to have been found dead, pierced through the body with the stakes.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE SHOOS, TIBBOOS, TUARICKS, BEGHARMIS, AND MUSGUESE.

THE SHOOS—THEIR SKILL IN HORSEMANSHIP—A SHOOS BUFFALO-HUNT—CHASE OF THE ELEPHANT—TRACES OF THEIR ARABIC ORIGIN—SHOOS DANCES—APPEARANCE AND DRESS OF THE WOMEN—THE TIBBOO TRIBE—THEIR ACTIVITY—DRESS AND APPEARANCE OF BOTH SEXES—THEIR SKILL WITH THE SPEAR—TIBBOO DANCES—THEIR CITIES OF REFUGE—THE TUARICKS—THEIR THIEVISH CHARACTER AND CRUEL MANNERS—TUARICK SINGING—THE BEGHARMIS—LOCALITY OF THE PEOPLE—THE SULTAN AND HIS RETINUE—CURIOUS ARCHITECTURE—COSTUME AND WEAPONS OF THE LANCERS—WRESTLERS, BOXERS, AND DANCERS—THE MUSGU TRIBE—APPEARANCE OF THE WOMEN—THE LIP ORNAMENT—A MUSGU CHIEF AND ATTENDANTS—A DISASTROUS BATTLE.

ONE of the most important of the many tribes which surround Lake Tchad is the Shooa tribe, which, like the Kanemboos, has been absorbed into the Bornuan kingdom.

Their chief value is their soldierly nature, and, as they are splendid horsemen, they form the greater part of the cavalry. Arabs by descent, they preserve the Arabic language, and speak it nearly pure, only mixing with it certain words and phrases of Bornuan origin. They present a strong contrast to the pure Bornuese, who are peaceable, quiet, slow, and good-natured. They are absurdly timid, and, except in pursuing an already routed enemy, are useless in the field, running away when there is the least sign of danger.

The Shoos, on the contrary, are bold, active, energetic, and daring, passing a considerable part of their lives on horseback, and such admirable equestrians that man and horse look like one animal. They are mighty hunters, not being contented to dig pits and catch the animals that fall into them, but boldly chasing the fierce and dangerous buffaloes and killing them with the spear alone.

The Shooa hunter rides to the swampy grounds where the buffalo loves to wallow, and drives the animals upon the firm land. He then makes choice of one, and gives chase to it, getting on its off side and pressing it closely. His horse is trained to run side by side with the buffalo, and the rider then stands like a circus-rider upon the two animals, one foot on his horse's back, and the other on that of the buffalo.

He then drives his spear through the shoulders of the buffalo towards the heart, and, if he has time, will fix another spear. He then drops on his horse, which leaps away from the wounded animal, so as to avoid the stroke of the horn which the buffalo is apt to give as it feels the pain of the wound. As a rule, the buffalo can run but a very short distance when thus injured, and, as soon as it staggers, the bold hunter dismounts, and gives the final stroke. Sometimes a badly-trained horse will be too eager, and press so far forward that the turn of the buffalo's head will wound it severely; but an old and experienced horse knows the danger as well as its rider, and just keeps itself far enough back to avoid the blow.

The Shooas chase the elephant in a similar manner, but, as the animal is so enormous, twenty or thirty hunters generally unite their forces, one always riding in front so as to draw the angry animal's attention, while the others follow it up, and inflict a series of wounds, under which it soon sinks. Sometimes, when the elephant is very active and savage, one of the hunters will dismount, and try to hamstring the animal, or will even creep under it and drive his spears into its belly.



BUFFALO-HUNTING.

It may be easily imagined that such hunters as these are likely to make good soldiers, and that the Bornuan sheikh was fully justified in forming them into so large a contingent of his army.

Their constant practice in hunting the wild buffalo renders them bold and successful cattle-managers. They are excellent drivers, and contrive to make whole herds of half-wild cattle obey them implicitly. In nothing is their skill shown so much as in forcing the cattle to cross the rivers in spite of their instinctive dread of the crocodiles that infest the water. One driver, or rather leader, enters the water first, dragging after him an ox by a cord tied to the ring through his nose. As soon as the timid cattle see that one of their number has ventured into the water, they are easily induced to follow its example, and whole herds of oxen and flocks of sheep are thus taken across in safety, the noise and splashing which they make frightening the crocodiles away. Even the women assist in cattle-driving, and not unfrequently the part of leader is taken by a woman.

As might be expected, the Shooas possess great numbers of cattle, and Major Denham calculated that this single tribe owned at least sixty thousand oxen, sheep, and

goats, besides multitudes of horses. The Shooas, indeed, are the chief horse-breeders of the Souden.

True to their origin, the Shooas have retained many of their Arabic characteristics. They build no houses, but live in tents, or rather moveable huts, composed of a simple framework of sticks, covered either with leather or rush mats. They have, however, lost much of the nomad character of the Arabs, probably because the fertile soil permits their flocks to remain permanently in the same spot. They pitch their tents in a circle, each such circle representing a town, and having two openings or entrances for the cattle.

Even the governor or sultan of the largest settlement does not inhabit a house. The establishment of one of these potentates, who was visited by Dr. Oudney, consisted of a great quadrangular enclosure made of mats suspended on poles, within which were a number of small huts, or rather tents, with walls of the same materials, but with thatched roofs, and much like straw beehives in shape. The doorway, or opening of each tent, is always placed westward, because rain always comes from the east. The furniture of the tents is as simple as their architecture, and consists of a rude bed, some mats, and a few gourds and earthen jers. The dwelling of a man of rank is distinguished by an ostrich egg-shell.

Not only do they build no houses of their own, but they never inhabit those which others have built, and, though they have overcome many a district, they have never peopled or conquered towns. For the surrounding negro nations they have the supreme contempt, and yet, with strange inconsistency, they are always tributary to one of the nations which they despise.

Probably on this account, unless they are well officered, they do not care to fight even in the service of that nation which they serve; and although they are foremost when plunder seems within their reach, they are always apt to retire from the battle when it seems likely to go against them.

Their amusements consist principally of dances, one of which is very peculiar, and is performed exclusively by women.

They advance by pairs at a time, and throw themselves into various attitudes, accompanied by the wild and rude music of the band. Suddenly they turn their backs on each other, stoop, and butt backwards at each other, the object being to upset the adversary. "She who keeps her equilibrium and destroys that of her opponent is greeted with cheers and shouts, and is led out of the ring by two matrons, covering her face with her hands. They sometimes come together with such violence as to hurt the belt of beads which all the women of rank wear round their bodies just above the hips, and showers of beads would fly in every direction. Some of these belts are twelve or sixteen inches wide, and cost fifteen or twenty dollars.

"Address, however, is often attended in these contests with better success than strength, and a well-managed feint exercised at the moment of the expected concussion, even when the weight of metal would be very unequal, often brings the more weighty tumbling to the ground, while the other is seen quietly seated on the spot where she had with great art and agility dropped herself. The Shooas are particularly happy in these feints, which were practised in different ways, either by suddenly stepping on one side, or by lying down."

The young girls are fond of skipping with a long rope, just as is practised in Europe. They display very great agility, which is not hindered by the presence of any garment. Major Denham once came on a party of girls emulating themselves in this manner, and enjoying the sport so thoroughly that nothing but the fear of losing dignity prevented him from joining them.

The manners of the Shooas are pleasing and gentle. They are a hospitable people, and give freely of the milk on which they almost entirely live, as is always the case with a pastoral tribe. Major Denham seems to have been particularly charmed with the manners of the Shooas, which he describes as peculiarly interesting and expressive. Even when bringing milk to their guests, the girls do so in a sort of punctilious way, each sitting down by the side of the bowl, and making a little ceremonious speech with her head wrapped in a mantle, which she afterwards removes for the sake of freer conversation.

The Shooa women are remarkable for their beauty. Their colour is a light ruddy copper, and they have fine open countenances, with aquiline noses and large eyes—all very remarkable among the negro tribes that surround them. The women are especially good-looking, and remind the observer of the gipsy women. Their dress consists of two wrappers, one round the waist and the other thrown over the shoulders. The latter is worn in different ways, sometimes like a shawl, sometimes tied under the arms so as to



SHOOA WOMEN.

leave both shoulders bare, and sometimes thrown over one shoulder and under the other. On their feet they wear curious shoes without heels, but coming up the sides of the foot above the ankles. Their hair is dressed in rather a curious manner, being plaited into innumerable little tresses, which are first pressed tightly to the head, and then suddenly diverge.

Handsome as are the Shooa women, their beauty is held in great contempt by the negro tribes among which they live, and who naturally think that thick lips, flat noses and black skins constitute the only real beauty in man or woman.

THE TIBBOOS.

ALLIED, in all probability, to the Shoos are the Tibboos.

They are a small and active race, and are admirable horsemen, always leaping on their horses at a single bound, aiding themselves with the shaft of a spear, which is used as a leaping-pole. Their saddles are of wood, lashed together with thongs of cowhide, and left open along the middle, so as to avoid galling the horse's back. They are well stuffed with camels' hair, and are comfortable enough when the rider is used to them. Both the girth and the stirrup leathers are of plaited leather, and the stirrups themselves are so small that they only admit of four toes. In fact, the Tibboo saddle is almost exactly like that of the Patagonian. One of these saddles is in my collection, and will be drawn in its proper place.

The men are very ugly, but the women are tolerably good-looking, and those who live in the country are better made and more active than those who live in the towns. The colour is copper, but the noses are flat, and the mouth is very large, though without the thick lips of the negro.

Their dress is a tolerably large Soudan wrapper, folded round the body and tied on the left shoulder so as to leave the right side bare. It is, however, disposed in such a manner as to be a perfectly delicate as well as a graceful costume. A smaller wrapper is thrown over the head, and is drawn across the face or flung back at pleasure. The hair is dressed in triangular flaps, which fall on either side of the face; and they wear necklaces of amber, which they prize very highly, and bits of red coral in their noses. They invariably carry something by way of a sun-screen, such as a bunch of ostrich-feathers, a tuft of long grass, or even a leafy bough.

Ugly as the men are, they are exceedingly vain of their personal appearance; and on one occasion, when Major Denham had lent a Tibboo chief a small looking-glass, the man spent several hours in contemplating his own features, bursting every now and then into loud ejaculations of joy at his own beauty, and sometimes leaping in the air in the extremity of his delight.

They contrive to make their naturally ugly faces still less attractive by their inveterate habit of taking snuff, which they take both by the mouth and the nostrils, the latter becoming enormously extended by their habit of thrusting the snuff into their heads with their fingers. Their mouths are also distended by their custom of placing quantities of snuff between the lips and gums.

The dress of the Tibboos is generally a single robe, or shirt. Close garments would only embarrass them by affording a lodgment for the sand, which has the effect of irritating the skin greatly, and making almost intolerable sores. They have, however, a mode of alleviating the pain of such sores by shampooing them with fat, a process which is always conducted by the women. The only article of dress about which they seem to trouble themselves is the turban, which is worn high on the head, and the ends brought under the chin and across the face, so as to conceal all but the nose, eyes, and part of the forehead. The turban is dyed of a dark indigo blue, and is mostly decorated with a vast number of charms, sewn in little leather cases.

Their horses, though small, are very handsome, and are quite strong enough to carry the light and active men who ride them. They are kept in admirable condition, and are fed almost entirely on camels' milk, which they take both fresh and when clotted. This diet suits them admirably, and the animals are in excellent condition.

The Tibboos stand in great dread of the Arabs, who plunder them unmercifully when they have the chance. They are better riders and better mounted than their foes; but they do not possess fire-arms, which they look upon with absolute terror. Major Denham remarks

that "five or six of them will go round and round a tree where an Arab has laid down his gun for a minute, stepping on tiptoe, as if afraid of disturbing it; talking to each other in whispers, as if the gun could understand their exclamations; and, I dare say, praying to it not to do them any injury as fervently as ever Man Friday did to Robinson Crusoe's musket."

Though they have no guns, they are more formidable warriors than they seem to know, hurling the spear with deadly aim and wonderful force. In throwing it, they do not raise the hand higher than the shoulder; and, as it leaves the hand, they give it a twist with the fingers that makes it spin like a rifle-bullet. The shaft is elastic, and, when the blade strikes the ground, the shaft bends nearly double. One young man threw his spear a good eighty yards; and, as each man carries two of these spears, it may be imagined that even the Arabs, with all their fire-arms, are not much more than a match for the Tibboos. They also carry the strange missile-sword which has already been mentioned. The warriors carry bows and arrows, as well as two daggers, one about eighteen inches long, stuck in the belt, and the other only six inches in length, and fastened to the arm by a ring. The Tibboos metaphorically term the long dagger their gun, and the short one their pistol.

The dances of the Tibboo women are not in the least like those of the Shooas. Dancing is among them one of the modes of greeting an honoured guest; and when a man of rank approaches, the women meet him with dances and songs, just as Jephthah's daughter met her victorious father, and the women of Israel met David after he had killed Goliath.

Nor are these dances the slow, gliding movements with which we generally associate Oriental dances. The women display very great activity, and fling themselves about in an astonishing manner. They begin by swaying their heads, arms, and bodies from side to side, but gradually work themselves up to a great pitch of excitement, leaping in the air, gnashing their teeth, whirling their arms about, and seeming to be in a perfect frenzy.

Some of the Tibboo settlements, or villages, are ingeniously placed on the tops of rocks with almost perpendicular sides. The situation is an inconvenient one, but it is useful in warding off the attacks of the Tuaricks, who make raids upon the unfortunate Tibboos, sweep off all the cattle and other property that they can find, and carry away the inhabitants to be sold as slaves, sparing neither age nor sex. Consequently, as soon as the Tibboos have warning of the approach of their enemies, they take refuge on the top of the rock, carrying with them all their portable property, draw up the ladders by which they ascend, and abandon the cattle to the invaders.

Partly on this account, and partly from natural carelessness, the Tibboos are almost regardless of personal appearance, and even their sultan, when he went to meet Major Denham, though he had donned in honour of his guests a new scarlet berouse, wore it over a filthy checked shirt; and his cap and turban, which purported to be white, were nearly as black as the hair of the wearer.

One might have thought that the continual sufferings which they undergo at the hands of the Tuaricks would have taught the Tibboos kindness to their fellow-creatures, whereas there are no people more reckless of inflicting pain. The Tibboo slave-dealers are notorious for the utter indifference to the sufferings of their captives whom they are conveying to the market, even though they lose many of them by their callous neglect. They often start on their journey with barely one quarter the proper amount of provisions or water, and then take their captives over wide deserts, where they fall from exhaustion, and are left to die. The skeletons of slaves strew the whole of the road. As the traveller passes along, he sometimes hears his horse's feet crashing among the dried and brittle bones of the dead. Even round the wells lie hundreds of skeletons, the remains of those who had reached the water, but had been too much exhausted to be revived by it. In that hot climate the skin of the dead person dries and shrivels under the sun like so much horn, and in many cases the features of the dead are preserved. Careless even of the pecuniary loss which they had suffered, the men who accompanied Major Denham only laughed when they recognised the faces of the shrivelled skeletons, and knocked them about with the butts of their weapons, laughing the while, and making jokes upon their present value in the market.

The Tibboos are, from their slight and active figures, good travellers, and are employed

as couriers to take messages from Bornu to Moorzuk, a task which none but a Tibboo will undertake. Two are sent in company, and so dangerous is the journey, that they do not expect that both will return in safety. They are mounted on the swiftest dromedaries, and are furnished with parched corn, a little brass basin, a wooden bowl, some dried meat, and two skins of water. Not only do they have to undergo the ordinary perils of travel, such as the hot winds, the sand-storms, and the chance of perishing by thirst, but they also run great risk of being killed by Arab robbers, who would not dare to attack a caravan, but are glad of the opportunity of robbing defenceless travellers.

Such events do frequently occur, and the consequence is that the Tibboos and the Arabs are in perpetual feuds, each murdering one of the enemy whenever he gets a chance, and reckoning each man killed as a point on his own side.

THE TUARICKS.

WE ought, before leaving the Tibboos, to give a few words to their enemies the Tuaricks.

These are emphatically a nation of thieves, never working themselves, and gaining the whole of their subsistence by robbing those who do labour. They do not even plant or sow, and their whole education consists in the art of robbery, in the management of the dromedary, and the handling of the spear. They live in tents, which are something like those of the ordinary Bedouin Arabs, and have, like our gipsies, a supreme contempt for all who are so degraded as to live in houses and congregate in cities.

Like the gipsies, they have their own language, into which they have only inserted occasional words of Arabic, and they have their own written alphabet, in which several letters are exactly the same as some of the Roman characters, though they do not express the same sounds, such as the H, the S, and the W. There are also the Greek Θ and Α, and the Hebrew ז, while several letters are composed of dots grouped in various ways. These letters are either written from right to left, as the Arabic, or *vice versa*, as European languages, or perpendicularly, as the Chinese; and in their country almost every large stone is engraved with Tuarick characters. Yet they have no literature, and assert that no book exists in their language. In sound the Tuarick language is harsh, but it is expressive, and seems to be capable of strength.

In their manners the Tuaricks are grave and sedate, and before Denham and Clapperton visited them they were carefully lectured by the guide on their proper behaviour, the demeanour of Captain Clapperton being considered too cheerful and humorous to suit the grave Tuaricks.

This applies only to the men, the women being lively and amusing. They are very fond of singing, joining in little bands for the purpose, and continuing their songs until midnight. The men, however, never sing, considering the song to be essentially a feminine amusement, and, probably for the same reason, they are never heard to recite poetry like most Orientals. The women wear the usual striped blue and white dress, and they mostly carry earrings made of shells. Wives are conventionally valued at six camels each; and whether on account of their value, or whether from an innate courtesy, the men treat their wives with respect, and permit them a freedom of manner which denotes the admission of equality.

The depredations of the Tuaricks have been mentioned when treating of the Tibboos, on whom the chief brunt of their attacks seems to fall. That they carry off all the cattle, and would seize even the Tibboos themselves for slaves, is a standing and reasonable grievance. But even the constant fear of these attacks does not seem to anger the Tibboos so much as the raids which the Tuaricks make on their salt-market. In the

Tibboo country there are some large salt marshes, which are extremely valuable to the owners, salt being a marketable commodity, fetching a high price, indeed being itself used as a sort of currency; a cylinder of coarse brown salt, weighing eleven pounds, being worth four or five dollars. The purified salt, which they obtain in a beautifully clear and white state, is put into baskets, and brings a correspondingly high price.

Not choosing to take the trouble of procuring salt for themselves, the Tuaricks supply themselves as well as their market by robbing the Tibboos, and in one season these



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robbers carried off twenty thousand bags of salt, selling the greater part in the Soudan market. The Tibboos were particularly enraged at this proceeding. It was bad enough to have their property stolen, but it was still worse to take their remaining salt to the market, and then find that the price had fallen in consequence of the Tuaricks having filled the market with the twenty thousand bags which they had stolen, and which they could therefore afford to sell at a very low price.

Among these people medicine and surgery are necessarily at a very low ebb, sham-pooing and cauterizing being the chief remedies for almost every complaint. One man who was suffering from an enlarged spleen was advised to undergo the operation, and

was laid on his back and firmly held down by five or six assistants. An iron was heated in the fire, and three spots burned on his side, just under the ribs. Each spot was about as large as a sixpence.

The iron was then replaced in the fire, and, while it was being heated, the assistants punched him in the side with their thumbs, asking whether the pressure hurt him; and, as their hard thumbs bruised his flesh, he was obliged to admit that it did hurt him. So four more scars were made, close to the others. He was then burned on his face, and three large scars burned near the spine; and, by way of making the cure quite complete, a large burn was made on his neck, just above the collar-bone.

The poor man endured the torture with great patience, and, when the operation was over, he drank a draught of water, and went on as usual with the camels.

THE BEGHARMIS.

WE now come to the curious Begharmi kingdom, between which and Bornu there rages a perpetual warfare. War was the ancient custom in 1824, when Denham and Clapperton visited the country, and many years afterwards, when Dr. Barth travelled through the district, it was going on as fiercely as ever. Indeed, if they could, each kingdom would exterminate the other, and, even as it is, great loss of life takes place by the continual battles, in which no quarter is given, except to those prisoners who are to be qualified for the harem. Consequently, the wives of the Bornuan sultan are guarded by Begharmi eunuchs, and those of the Begharmi sultan by Bornuese.

Even the Bornuan sheikh had yielded to the prevailing custom, and maintained thirty of these unfortunate individuals. Major Denham saw about a dozen of them shortly after their admission, and evidently showed pity by his countenance. The chief, seeing this, exclaimed, "Why, Christian, what signifies all this? They are only Begharmis! dogs! Kaffirs! enemies! They ought to have been cut in four quarters alive; and now they will drink coffee, eat sugar, and live in a palace all their lives."

When Dr. Barth visited Begharmi, the sultan was absent on one of his warlike expeditions, and it was some time before he was allowed to proceed to Massena, the capital. At last he did so, and had an opportunity of seeing the sultan return after his expedition, in which he had been victorious. First rode the lieutenant-governor, surrounded by his horsemen, and next came another officer, behind whom was borne a long and peculiarly-formed spear, connected in some way with their religion. After him rode the commander-in-chief, and then the sultan himself, riding on a grey horse, wearing a yellow burnouse, and sheltered from the sun by two umbrellas, one green and one yellow, held over him by slaves. He was continually cooled by six slaves wielding long ostrich-feather fans, and having their right arms clothed in iron armour; and around him rode a few of the principal chiefs.

Then came the war-camel, bearing the battle-drums, which were vigorously belaboured by the drummer. Next came a long line of the sultan's wives, clothed in black; then the baggage, and then the soldiers. Prisoners are led in the triumphal procession, and are taken to the harem, where they are insulted by the inmates. The handsomest among them are selected for the service of the harem, and the remainder are put to death.

In this case the Begharmi sultan had been victorious; but in one battle witnessed by Major Denham the Bornuese won the day, the sheikh having arranged his few fire-arms with such skill that the Begharmis, nearly five thousand strong, fell back in confusion, and were at once attacked by the Bornuan horse, who are ready enough to fight when the enemy seems to be running away. The slaughter was enormous, considering the number of the combatants. Of the two hundred Begharmi chiefs who came into the field, only

one was said to have escaped, seven sons of the sultan were killed, together with some seventeen hundred soldiers, while many more were reported to have been murdered after the battle was over. They also lost nearly five hundred horses, and nearly two hundred women, who, according to the odd custom of the land, followed their lords to battle.

In the greater part of the country, as well as at Loggun, the houses are built in a very curious manner, being composed of cell within cell, like a nest of pill-boxes. This curious architecture is intended to keep out the flies, which at some seasons of the year swarm in such numbers that even the inhabitants dare not move out of their houses for several



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hours in the day. Major Denham would not believe the story until it was corroborated by the appearance of one of his men, who imprudently ventured into the open air, and came back with his eyes and head swollen up, and so bitten that he was laid up for three days.

The Begharmis, though they are always at war with the Bornuese, resemble them in so many points that a detailed description is not needed, and we will only glance at a few of their peculiarities.

As we have mentioned the constant warfare in which they are engaged, we will give a few words to the remarkable cavalry force which forms the chief strength of the Begharmi army. These men present a most remarkable appearance, as may be seen by reference to the above illustration. They carry a most curious spear, with a double head, something like a pitchfork with flattened prongs.

The most remarkable point is, however, the armour with which the Begharmi lancer is defended. It is made of quilted cloth or cotton, and is almost exactly identical with

the quilted armour worn by the Chinese, and which caused the miserable deaths of so many soldiers, from the cotton taking fire from the flash of their own muskets. The whole of the body and limbs of the rider are covered with this armour, while he wears on his head a helmet of the same material; and his horse is defended as well as himself. Although useless against fire-arms, the cotton quilting is proof against arrows, and is therefore useful in guarding the soldier against the poisoned weapons of his foes.

As this armour, though light, is very cumbrous, it is seldom worn except in actual combat, or when the general reviews his troops; and it may be doubted whether it is not such an impediment, both to horse and soldier, that the troops would be more efficient without it. Perhaps the confidence which it inspires is its chief use, after all. These men are always employed as heavy horse, to protect the van and guard the rear of the army, the archers being stationed just behind them, and shooting whenever they find a chance. The saddle is as awkward as the armour, rising both in front and behind to such a height that the soldier could hardly fall to the ground even if he were killed. In front it forms a sort of little table, on which the soldier can rest his bridle-arm, which might be fatigued with holding the reins and lifting the sleeve of the quilted coat.

The Begharmis may be almost reckoned as negroes, their skins being black, and their faces having much of the flatness and thickness of the negro. They are powerful and active men, and the sultans of other countries pride themselves on their trained Begharmis wrestlers, these men being chosen for their gigantic stature and well-knit muscles.

When two athletes contend, it is no child's play, the vanquished being sometimes killed on the spot, and frequently maimed for life. Their masters have a positive monomania on the subject, and urge on the wrestlers by loud cries, promising great rewards to the victor, and threatening the severest punishment to the vanquished. The great object of the wrestlers is to catch the opponent by the hips, and so to lift him off his feet and dash him to the ground. The master cares nothing for a wrestler who has been once conquered; and a man for whom his owner would refuse a couple of hundred dollars in the morning may be sold for a fiftieth of the sum before night.

Similar to these combats are the boxing-matches, in which the negroes from Haussa are thought to be the best that can be obtained. A spirited account of one of these matches is given by Major Denham:—

"Having heard a great deal of the boxers of Haussa, I was anxious to witness their performance. Accordingly I sent one of my servants last night to offer 2,000 whydah for a pugilistic exhibition in the morning. As the death of one of the combatants is almost certain before a battle is over, I expressly prohibited all fighting in earnest; for it would have been disgraceful, both to myself and my country, to hire men to kill one another for the gratification of idle curiosity.

"About half an hour after the 'massu-dubu' were gone, the boxers arrived, attended by two drums and the whole body of butchers, who here compose 'the fancy.' A ring was soon formed by the master of the ceremonies throwing dust on the spectators to make them stand back. The drummers entered the ring, and began to drum lustily. One of the boxers followed, quite naked, except a skin round the middle. He placed himself in an attitude as if to oppose an antagonist, and wrought his muscles into action, seemingly to find out that every sinew was in full power for the approaching combat; then, coming from time to time to the side of the ring, and presenting his right arm to the bystanders, he said, 'I am a hyæna'—'I am a lion'—'I am able to kill all that oppose me.' The spectators to whom he presented himself laid their hands on his shoulder, repeating, 'The blessing of God be upon thee'—'Thou art a hyæna'—'Thou art a lion.' He then abandoned the ring to another, who showed off in the same manner.

"The right arm and hand of the pugilists were then bound with narrow country cloth, beginning with a fold round the middle finger; when, the hand being first clenched with the thumb between the fore and mid fingers, the cloth was passed in many turns round the fist, the wrist, and the forearm.

"After about twenty had separately gone through their attitudes of defiance and appeals to the bystanders, they were next brought forward by pairs. If they happened to be friends, they laid their left breasts together twice, and exclaimed, 'We are lions'—'We

are friends.' One then left the ring, and another was brought forward. If the two did not recognise one another as friends, the set-to immediately commenced.

"On taking their stations, the two pugilists first stood at some distance, parrying with the left hand open, and, whenever opportunity offered, striking with the right. They generally aimed at the pit of the stomach and under the ribs. Whenever they closed, one seized the other's head under his arm, and beat it with his fist, at the same time striking with his knee between his antagonist's thighs. In this position, with the head 'in chancery,' they are said sometimes to attempt to gouge or scoop out one of the eyes. When they break loose, they never fail to give a swingeing blow with the heel under the ribs, or sometimes under the left ear. It is these blows that are so often fatal.

"The combatants were repeatedly separated by my orders, as they were beginning to lose their temper. When this spectacle was heard of, girls left their pitchers at the wells, the market-people threw down their baskets, and all ran to see the fight. The whole square before my house was crowded to excess. After six pairs had gone through several rounds, I ordered them, to their great satisfaction, the promised reward, and the multitude quietly dispersed."

The Begharmi women are good dancers, their movements being gentle and graceful. They make much use of their hands, sometimes crossing them on their breasts, sometimes clasping them together, and sometimes just pressing the tips of the fingers against those of the opposite hand. As they dance, they sing in low and plaintive tones, swinging the body backwards and forwards, and bending the head from side to side, ending by sinking softly on the ground, and covering their faces.

MUSGU.

NEARLY, if not quite equal to the Begharmis in stature and strength are the Musgu tribe, which inhabit a district of Mandara. In consequence of their fine proportions, Musgu slaves are greatly valued by the surrounding nations, and are employed in various ways. The sultans and great chiefs are fond of having their male Musgu slaves as wrestlers; and next in interest to a match between two Begharmis is a contest between a Begharmi and a Musgu wrestler.

The female slaves are proportionately strong, but they are never purchased by the Fezzan traders, inasmuch as they lack beauty of feature as much as they possess strength of muscle. Their faces are large and ugly, and they have a custom of wearing a silver ornament in the lower lip. This ornament is about as large as a shilling, and is worn exactly after the fashion of the "pelele," which has already been described and figured. In order to make room for this ugly appendage, the women knock out the two middle teeth of the lower jaw, and, in process of time, the lip is dragged down by the inserted metal, and has a very horrid and repulsive appearance. Their hair is dressed like that of the Bornu women, i.e. one large plait or roll from the forehead to the nape of the neck, and two others on each side.

They are very trustworthy, and are set to laborious tasks, from which weaker slaves would shrink. They do all the agricultural work,—digging the ground, planting the seed, and carrying home the crops. They also perform the office of watchers, by night as well as by day, and there is scarcely a year passes that one or two of these patient creatures are not carried off by the lions, who creep up to them under shelter of the corn, and then spring upon them.

The men are equally ugly. Only the chiefs wear any clothing, and even they are seldom clad in anything more than a goatskin or leopard's hide, hung over the shoulders so as to bring the head of the animal on the wearer's breast. Their heads are covered

with rather strange-looking caps, and their hair, as it straggles from under the caps, is thick and bristly. They wear on their arms large rings of bone or ivory, and round their necks hang trophies of their valour, being necklaces made of the strung teeth of slain enemies. They paint their bodies with red, and stain their teeth of the same colour, so that they present a singularly wild and savage appearance. They are mounted on small but strong and active horses, which they ride without saddles and almost without bridles, a slight piece of cord being tied halter-wise round the animal's muzzle.

Their weapons consist mostly of the spear and the missile-knives, similar to those which have been already described. The inferior men, though they are mounted, and



MUSGU CHIEF.

carry the same weapons as the chief, wear no clothing except a leather girdle round the waist, and the same light attire is worn by the women. Though so liable to be enslaved themselves, they are great slave-dealers; and when they pay tribute to the Sultan of Mandara, or wish to make a peace-offering, the greater part of it consists of slaves, both male and female.

In the above illustration is seen a Musgu chief going to battle. He is one of the very great chiefs, as is shown from the fact that he wears a tobe instead of a skin. In his right hand is his spear, and in his left a couple of the missile-knives. Behind him ride his soldiers, naked men on naked horses. In the background is seen a party of women engaged in the water, with which element they are very familiar, and are not kept out of it by any fear of wetting their clothes. Near them is one of the mound-like tombs under which a dead chief has been buried—the Musguese being almost the only African tribe who erect such a monument.

The huts are seen a little farther back, and near them are two of the remarkable granaries, covered with projecting ornaments, and mostly kept so well filled that marauders are nearly as anxious to sack the granaries as to steal the people. On the branches of the trees is a quantity of grass which has been hung there to dry in the sun, and to be used as hay for the horses.

When Major Denham was near the Musgu territory, he was told that these strange and wild-looking people were Christians. He said that they could not be so, because they had just begged of him the carcase of a horse which had died during the night, and were at that time busily employed in eating it. The man, however, adhered to his opinion, saying that, although he certainly never had heard that Christians ate horse-flesh they did eat swine's-flesh, and that was infinitely more disgusting.

These people were unwittingly the cause of great loss to the Bornuese and Mandara. The Arabs who had accompanied Denham and Clapperton from Tripoli were very anxious, before returning home, to make a raid on their own account, and bring back a number of Musgu slaves. The sheikh of Bornu thought that this would be a good opportunity of utilizing the fire-arms of the Arabs against the warlike and unyielding Fellatahs, and sent them off together with three thousand of his own troops.

As had been anticipated, when they reached Mandara, the sultan would not allow them to attack Musgu, which he looked upon as his own particular slave-preserve, but added some of his own troops to those of the Bornuan sheikh, and sent them to capture as many Fellatahs as they liked, doing them the honour of accompanying the expedition in person. It is also evident that both the sultan and the sheikh disliked as well as feared the Arabs, and were very willing to turn to account the terrible weapons which they carried, and by means of which they had made themselves so overbearing and disagreeable.

When they reached the first Fellatah town and attacked it, they found it to be strongly defended with *chevaux de frise* of sharpened stakes six feet in height, behind which were stationed their archers, who poured showers of poisoned arrows on the invaders. The Arabs, after a struggle, carried the fence and pursued the Fellatahs up the hill. Here they were received with more arrows, brought to the archers by the women, and with stones rolled down the hill. Had the Bornu and Mandara soldiers pushed forward, the whole town must have been taken, instead of which they prudently kept out of range of the poisoned arrows.

The Fellatahs, seeing their cowardice, then assumed the offensive, whereupon the Bornu and Mandara soldiers at once ran away, headed by the sultan, who would have laid claim to the town had the Arabs taken it. The whole force was routed with great loss, the Bornu leader—a truly brave man—was killed with a poisoned arrow, and Major Denham was severely wounded, stripped of all his clothes, and barely escaped with his life.

CHAPTER LXIV.

ABYSSINIA.

ABYSSINIA, THE LAND OF MYSTERY—ORIGIN OF THE NAME—THE KINGDOM OF PRESTER JOHN—THE THREE ABYSSINIAN DISTRICTS OR KINGDOMS—GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE ABYSSINIANS—DRESS OF THE MEN—THE QUARRY AND THE TROUSERS—GOING TO BED—THE DINO AND ITS FASHIONS—MEN'S ORNAMENTS—HOW THE JEWELLER IS PAID—WEAPONS OF THE ABYSSINIANS—THE SWORD OR SHOTEL, AND ITS SINGULAR FORM AND USES—THE SPEAR AND MODE OF KEEPING IT IN ORDER—THE SHIELD AND ITS ORNAMENTS—APPEARANCE OF A MOUNTED CHIEF—SWORDSMANSHIP—THE ABYSSINIAN AS A SOLDIER—DRESS AND APPEARANCE OF THE WOMEN—THEIR ORNAMENTS—TATTOOING—MODES OF DRESSING THE HAIR—THE ABYSSINIAN PILLOW.

ABYSSINIA is one of the most wonderful nations on the face of the earth. It was long a land of mystery, in which the unicorn and the lion held their deadly combats, in which dragons flapped their scaly wings through the air, in which the mountains were of gold and the river-beds paved with diamonds, and, greatest marvel of all, in which Prester John, the priest and king, held his court, a Christian Solomon of the Middle Ages.

In this last tale there was this amount of truth, that a Christian Church existed in Abyssinia—a Church of extreme antiquity, which has remained to the present day, having accommodated itself in a most remarkable manner to the race-characteristics of the people. Setting aside the interest which has been excited in Abyssinia by the successful march of a British force to the military capital, Abyssinia deserves description in this volume. At first sight it would appear that a Christian country would find no place in a work which has nothing to do with civilization; but, as we proceed with the account, we shall find that Christianity in Abyssinia has done scarcely anything to civilize the nation, as we understand the word, and, instead of extirpating the savage customs of the people, has in a strange manner existed alongside of them, if such a term may be used.

It is my purpose in the following pages to give a succinct description of the uncivilized manners and customs of the Abyssinians, together with a brief account of that peculiar system of Christianity which could survive for nearly fifteen hundred years, and yet leave the people in a scarcely better moral state than if they had never heard the name of Christ.

LIKE many other large communities, the great Abyssinian nation is composed of several elements, differing as much from each other as the Scotch, the Irish, the Welsh, and the other mixed races who together form the English nation. In Abyssinia, however, these different elements have not fused themselves so much together as is the case with this kingdom, and each principality is independent, having its own ruler and its own laws.

That such a state of things is injurious to the interests of the kingdom is evident to all students of history, and we find that every great ruler has attempted to unite them under one head. The peculiar character of the Africans is, however, strong in these people; and as soon as the strong hand that held them together is removed, they fly asunder, and

resume their individuality. To the Abyssinian kingdom may be well applied the familiar epigram of a "concurrence of antagonistic atoms."

Their native name, "Hâbash," of which our word Abyssinia is a corruption, signifies "mixture," and is exceedingly appropriate to them. Among the many mixtures which compose the Abyssinian nation, the natives reckon a considerable Jewish element. They say that the Sheba of Scripture was Abyssinia, and that their queen went to visit Solomon for the express purpose of introducing the blood of so eminent a sovereign into the royal succession of Abyssinia. She waited till she had borne a son, and through that son the successive kings of Abyssinia believe themselves to be lineal descendants of Solomon. Whether this story be true or not, it is thoroughly in consonance with the very lax morality of Abyssinian females. When the queen returned to her own country, she was followed by a number of Jews, and they say that at the time of the destruction of the Temple, and the captivity, a great multitude of fugitives followed their compatriots, and took refuge in Abyssinia.

Numbers of Greeks and Portuguese have at different times taken up their residence in Abyssinia, and, like the immigrant Jews, been absorbed into the country, so that the native name of Hâbash is seen to be well deserved.

Three of the districts or sub-kingdoms have the best claim to the title of Abyssinia, and are inhabited by Christians of that peculiar kind to which allusion has just been made. The first is the Tigré (pronounced Teegray) country, which takes its name as a province from a small district to which this name belongs. It extends to the Red Sea on the east, and to the Taccazy river on the west, and has a rather uncertain range between lat. 15° and 12° N. It is divided from Nubia by a number of independent tribes, while some of the Gallas and other tribes are on its northern boundary.

Westward of the Taccazy lies the second kingdom or province, called Amhara, in the middle of which is situated the city of Gondar; and the third is Shooa, which lies southward of Tigré and Amhara, and, strangely enough, is separated from them by Gallas and other tribes.

Of these three districts, Tigré seems to afford the best characteristic of the Abyssinians, and therefore the chief part of the account will be devoted to the Tigréans. Among these people Mr. Mansfield Parkyns lived for a considerable time, and to him we are indebted for the greater part of our information concerning this remarkable nation.

As a rule, the Abyssinians are of moderate stature, rather below than above the English average. Mr. Parkyns saw one or two men who attained the height of six feet two inches, but remarks that such examples were very rare.

As is often the case with Africans, the complexion is exceedingly variable, sometimes being of a very pale coppery brown, and sometimes almost as dark as the negro. This variation, which is often the effect of locality, is attributed by Mr. Parkyns to the mixture of races. As, moreover, marriages are of the loosest description in Abyssinia, Christian though it be, a man may be often seen with a number of children by different wives, all unlike each other in point of complexion; a brother and sister, for example, being totally dissimilar, one short and black as a negro, and the other tall and fair as an European.

The negro element seems to expend itself chiefly in colour, the peculiarity of the negro form having been nearly obliterated by continual mixture with other races. Now and then the negro conformation of leg shows itself, but even this evidence is rather uncommon.

The women of the higher class are remarkable for their beauty, not only of feature but of form, and possess singularly small and pretty hands and feet, all of which beauties their style of dress exhibits freely. Their features are almost of the European type, and the eyes are exceedingly large and beautiful—so large, indeed, that an exact drawing would have the appearance of exaggeration to persons who were unaccustomed to them. It is said, indeed, that the only women who can be compared with the Abyssinians are the French half-castes of the Mauritius.

The accompanying illustration will give a good idea of the features and general appearance of the Abyssinians.

Beginning at the top, we have first a profile view of a woman's head, to show the elaborate way in which the hair is plaited and arranged. Next comes a front view of a head, showing the appearance of the hair as it is teased and combed out before plaiting. The third figure gives a view of the head and bust of a lady of rank. This is drawn to show another mode of arranging the hair, as well as the elaborate tattoo with which the women love to decorate every inch of the body and limbs from the neck to the tips of the fingers and toes.



ABYSSINIAN HEADS.

Below are the portraits of two men. One, a priest, has covered his shaven head with a white turban, the mark of the priesthood among the Abyssinians, among whom the laity wear no head covering save their highly-decorated and well-greased locks. The second portrait is the profile view of a man, and gives a good idea of the cast of countenance. The reader may scarcely believe that the Abyssinians have been cited by a certain school of philanthropists as examples of the intellectual capability of the *negro*.

Next to the personal appearance of the Abyssinians comes their dress. Varying slightly in different parts of the country, and changing in some of its details according to

the fashion of the day, the dress of the Abyssinians is essentially the same throughout the kingdom. The principal articles of dress are trousers, and a large mantle or "quarry."

The trousers are of soft cotton, and are of two kinds, the one descending some three inches below the knee, and the other terminating the same distance above it. The trousers are very tight, and an Abyssinian dandy will wear them of so very close a fit that to get them on is nearly an hour's work.

Round the waist is rolled the sash or belt, about one yard in width. This is also of cotton, and varies in length according to the fineness of the material. A common belt will be about fifteen yards in length, but a very fine one, which only contains the same amount of material, will be from fifty to sixty yards long. From thirty to forty yards is the ordinary length for an Abyssinian gentleman's belt. It is put on by holding the end with one hand to the side, and getting a friend to spread it with his hands, while the wearer turns round and round, and so winds himself up in the belt, just as our officers did when the long silk sashes were worn round the waist.

These belts are not only useful in preserving health, but act as defensive armour in a country where all the men are armed, and where they are apt to quarrel terribly as soon as they are excited by drink. Even in war time, the belt often protects the wearer from a blow which he has only partially guarded with his shield.

Like the trousers and belt, the mantle or "quarry" is made of cotton, and is very fine and soft; and is made in a rather curious manner. The ordinary quarry consists of three pieces of cotton cloth, each fifteen feet long by three wide, and having at each end a red stripe, some five or six inches in width.

These are put together after a rather curious and complicated manner. "One is first taken and doubled carefully, so that the red stripes of each end come exactly together. A second piece is then taken, and also folded, but inside out, and one half of it laid under and the other half over the first piece, so that the four red borders now come together. One edge of this quadruple cloth is then sewn from top to bottom, and the last-mentioned piece is turned back, so that the two together form one double cloth of two breadths. The third piece is now added in a similar manner, the whole forming a 'quarry' which, lest any reader should have got confused with the above description, is a white double cloth, with a red border near the bottom only." A completed quarry is seven feet six inches long, by nine feet wide. The quarries are seldom washed more than once a year, and, in consequence of the abundant grease used in the Abyssinian toilet, they become horribly dirty. The natives, however, rather admire this appearance. An Abyssinian dandy despises a clean quarry, and would no more wash his mantle than a fashionable lady would bleach a piece of old lace.

There are different qualities of quarry, the best being made of materials so fine that six pieces are required, and it is folded four times double. The coloured stripe at the edge is of red, yellow, and blue silk, neatly worked together. It is worn in various modes, the most usual resembling that in which a Highlander wears his plaid, so as to leave the right arm at liberty.

The quarry forms the sleeping costume of the Abyssinians, who take off their trousers, and roll themselves up so completely in their mantles that they cover up their entire bodies, limbs, and heads. When they arrange themselves for the night, they contrive to remove their trousers, and even their belts, without exposing themselves in the least; and when we remember the extreme tightness of the former article of dress, and the inordinate length of the latter, it is a matter of some surprise that the feat should be accomplished so cleverly.

Married persons pack themselves up in a similar manner, but in pairs, their mantles forming a covering for the two. It is very curious to see how they manage to perform this seemingly impossible task. They seat themselves side by side, the man on the woman's right hand, and place the short end of the quarry under them. The long end is then thrown over their heads, and under its shelter the garments are removed. The quarry is rolled tightly round the couple, and they are ready for repose.

So large a mantle is, of course, inconvenient on a windy day, and in battle would be a fatal encumbrance. On the former occasion it is confined to the body by a short

cape-like garment called the "dino" or "lemd," and in war the quarry is laid aside, and the dino substituted for it. The dino is often a very elaborate garment, made of cloth, velvet, or, more frequently, the skin of some animal, cut in a peculiar manner so as to leave eight strips pendent from the lower edge by way of a fringe.

The skins of the lion and black leopard are most esteemed, and are only worn on gala days by chiefs and very great warriors. They are lined with scarlet cloth, and are fitted with a number of amulets which appear in front of the breast. A dino made of the black-maned lion skin will often be valued at eight or ten pounds, while a common one will scarcely cost one-tenth of that amount. A very favourite skin is that of the unborn calf, which takes a soft lustre like that of velvet, and accordingly can only be worn by dandies who are rich enough to purchase it, or kill a cow for the sake of this skin. An ordinary calf-skin is contemned, and would only be worn by a man of the lowest class. A peculiar kind of sheep is kept by the Abyssinians for the sake of its wool, which is sometimes more than two feet in length.

The sheep lead a very artificial life, are kept day and night on conches, are fed with meat and milk, and their fleeces washed and combed regularly as if they were ladies' lap-dogs. The result of this treatment is, that they have beautiful fleeces, which are worth from twenty to thirty shillings each, but their flesh is utterly useless for consumption, being very small in quantity, and offensive in quality. The fleeces are generally dyed black, that being a fashionable colour in Abyssinia.

The skin of the hyæna or the dog is never used for clothing, and the natives have a superstitious fear of the red jackal, thinking that if they should be wounded while wearing a dino of jackal skin, one of the hairs might enter the wound, and so prove fatal to the sufferer. The leopard-skin is never worn by ordinary Abyssinians, being exclusively used by the Gallas and Shooas, and by a certain set of dervishes called the *Zacchâri*.

Contrary to the habit of most African nations, the men wear but few ornaments, those which they employ being almost always signs of valour. Amulets are found on almost every man, and many of them wear whole strings of these sacred articles, crossed over the shoulders and falling as low as the knees. Most Abyssinians carry a pair of tweezers for extracting thorns from the feet and legs, and the wealthier among them place their tweezers in a highly ornamented silver case, which is hung from the handle of the sword.

Whenever an Abyssinian is seen wearing a silver chain, he is known to have killed an elephant, while those who have distinguished themselves in battle are known by a sort of silver bracelet, which extends from the wrist nearly as far as the elbow. It opens longitudinally by hinges, and is fastened with a clasp. This ornament is called the "bitoa," and is often very elegantly engraved, and adorned with gilded patterns. The silversmiths who make these and similar articles are rather oddly treated. They are considered as slaves, are not allowed to leave the country, and yet are treated with considerable kindness, save and except the payment for their labour.

Consequently, the silversmith, finding that he has to wait a very long time for his money, and probably will not get it at all, is forced to pay himself by embezzling a quantity of the gold and silver which are given him for the manufacture of the bracelet, and substituting an equal amount of less precious metal. Mr. Parkyns mentions that he has known a man to receive silver equal to thirty sequins, and to use in the work rather less than eight.

Many of these bracelets are ornamented with little bell-like pieces of silver round the edge, which tinkle and clash as the wearer moves. Similar bells are attached to a sort of silver coronet worn by very great men, and, together with the silver chains to which they are attached, hang over the ears and neck of the wearer.

As to the weapons of the Abyssinians, they consist chiefly of the sword, spear, and shield. In later days fire-arms have been introduced, but, as this work treats only of the uncivilized part of mankind, these weapons will not be reckoned in the Abyssinian armoury.

The sword, or "shotel," is a very oddly-shaped weapon. The blade is nearly straight for some two feet, and then turns suddenly like a sickle, but with a more angular bend. The edge is on the inside, and this peculiar form is intended for striking downwards over

the enemy's shield. In order to give weight to the blow, the blade is much wider and heavier towards the point than at the hilt. As if this form of blade did not make the sword feeble enough, the hilt is so constructed that it prevents all play of the wrist. The handle is made of a pyramidal piece of rhinoceros horn, five inches wide at one end, and three at the other. It is made into the proper shape for a handle by cutting out semicircular pieces along the sides, leaving the four sharp corners in their previous form. When the sword is grasped, one of the four angles must come under the wrist, so that if the weapon were allowed to play freely, as in ordinary swordsmanship, the point would be driven into the wrist.

As with the natives of Southern Africa, the Abyssinians prefer soft iron to tempered steel, the former admitting of being straightened when bent, but the latter being apt to snap. The sword is always hung on the right side, in order to be out of the way of the shield, especially when, as in travelling, it is swung backwards and forwards with the play of the left arm.

The sheath of the sword is made of leather or red morocco, and is ornamented by the great men with a number of silver plates. At the end of the sheath is a metal ball, called "lomita." This curious ornament is mostly of silver, and is almost as large as a billiard ball. The sword-belt is of the same material as the scabbard.

The spear is from six to seven feet in length, and the head is squared like that of a pike. The four sides are mostly grooved, so that the head of the weapon looks something like a quadrangular bayonet. This spear is used both as a lance and as a javelin, a good soldier being able to strike a man at thirty or forty yards' distance. The cavalry always carry two spears, one of which is thrown, and the other retained to be used as a lance. They have rather a curious mode of using the lance, aiming it at the adversary as if they meant to throw it, but only letting the shaft slip through the hand, and catching it by the butt.

The shafts of the spears are very neatly made, and much pains are bestowed upon them. They are made of very young trees, which are cleared of the bark by fire, and are then straightened and dried. This operation requires a very skilful manipulator, as, if the wood be too much dried, it is brittle and snaps; if irregularly heated, it never will remain straight; and if not dried sufficiently, it warps with every change of weather. When properly straightened, the shafts are greased and hung over the fire for several months, until they assume the proper reddish-yellow hue.

When not in use, each lance is kept in a sheath, to the top of which is fastened a loop by which it can be hung to the end of the cow's horn which does duty for a peg in Abyssinian houses, and which is just long enough to allow the lance to hang straight without touching the wall.

The Abyssinian shield is made of buffalo-hide, and is strong enough to resist any sword cut, and to throw off a spear if received obliquely upon it. If, however, a good spear should strike the shield fairly, it will pierce it. In order to preserve the needful obliquity, the shield is made like the segment of a sphere, and has a projecting boss in the centre. The shield is almost always ornamented, the most valued decorations being the mane, tail, and paw of the lion, arranged in various ways according to the taste of the owner. To some shields is attached the skin of the Guereza monkey, which, with its bold contrast of long jetty-black and snowy-white hair, has really a striking and artistic effect. This, however, is always discarded when the native kills a lion.

Chiefs always have their shields nearly covered with silver plates and bosses, a fashion which is imitated in brass by the poorer soldiers. Still, if a common soldier had a good shield, he would not hide its beauties with brass plates. A chief is distinguished not only by his silver-mounted shield, but by his silver-plated sword-sheath. On his head he wears a silver frontlet, called "akodamir," having silver chains hanging from it, and a white feather stuck in the hair behind the frontlet. If a man of notable courage, he also wears the lion-skin dingo.

Round the edge of the shield are pierced a number of holes, through which is passed the thong that suspends it to the wall when not in use. Each day, as it hangs on the wall, the owner takes it down and shifts the thong from one hole to another, so that

the shield may not be warped, and lose its prized roundness. The shield must swing quite clear of the wall.

To a good swordsman the shield would be an incumbrance, and not a means of safety. On account of the necessity of holding out the shield with the left arm, the sword becomes of little value as an offensive weapon, the owner not daring to strike lest he should expose himself to a counter blow. Whereas he who, like Fitz-James, finds his "blade both sword and shield," makes very light of an Abyssinian warrior's prowess.



A MOUNTED CHIEF.

Mr. Parkyns says on this subject, that any ordinary swordsman, without a shield, can easily beat the best Abyssinian armed with sword and shield also. The best mode of fighting the Abyssinian warrior is to make a feint at his head. Up goes his heavy shield, which certainly guards his head, but prevents the owner from seeing that his adversary is making a sweeping cut at his legs. Should the cut 5 or 6 fail, make another feint at the head, and follow it up with a real blow. Anticipating a feint, the Abyssinian lowers his shield to protect his legs, and as he does so, receives the edge of the sword full on his unprotected crown.

Although he is well armed, looks very fierce, and is of a quarrelsome disposition, the Abyssinian soldier is not remarkable for courage, and prefers boasting to fighting. He never seems to enter the battle with the idea of merely killing or routing the enemy, but is always looking out for trophies for himself. As with many nations, and as was the case with the Israelites in the earlier times, the Abyssinian mutilates a fallen enemy, and carries off a portion of his body as a trophy, which he can exhibit before his chief, and on which he can found a reputation for valour for the rest of his life.

So much do the Abyssinians prize this savage trophy that, just as American Indians have feigned death and submitted to the loss of their scalps without giving the least

sign of life, men wounded in battle have suffered an even more cruel mutilation, and survived the injury. An Abyssinian has even been known to kill a comrade in order to secure this valued trophy, when he has been unable, either from mischance or want of courage, to kill an enemy.

WE come now to the women and their dress.

Young girls are costumed in the simplest possible style, namely, a piece of cotton stuff wrapped round the waist, and descending half way to the knee. Should the girl be rich enough to afford a large wrapper, she brings one end of it upwards and throws it over the left shoulder. In Tigré the girls prefer a black goatskin, ornamented with cowries. A married woman wears a sort of loose shirt, and a mantle, or quarry, similar to that which is worn by the men, but of finer materials. Should she be able to own a mule, she wears trousers, which are very full at the waist, and decrease gradually to the ankle, where they fit like the skin.

As to their ornaments, they are so numerous as to defy description. That which costs the least, and is yet the most valued, is the tattoo, which is employed with a profusion worthy of the New Zealander.

"The Tigréan ladies," so writes Mr. Parkyns, "tattoo themselves; though, as this mode of adorning the person is not common excepting among the inhabitants of the capital and persons who have passed some time there, I should judge it to be a fashion imported from the Amhara.

"The men seldom tattoo more than one ornament on the upper part of the arm, near the shoulder, while the women cover nearly the whole of their bodies with stars, lines, and crosses, often rather tastefully arranged. I may well say nearly the whole of their persons, for they mark the neck, shoulders, breasts, and arms, down to the fingers, which are enriched with lines, to imitate rings, nearly to the nails. The feet, ankles, and calves of the legs are similarly adorned, and even the gums are by some pricked entirely blue, while others have them striped alternately blue and the natural pink.

"To see some of their designs, one would give them credit for some skill in the handling their pencil; but, in fact, their system of drawing the pattern is purely mechanical. I had one arm adorned; a rather blind old woman was the artist; her implements consisted of a small pot of some sort of blacking, made, she told me, of charred herbs, a large home-made iron pin, about one-fourth of an inch at the end of which was ground fine, a bit or two of hollow cane, and a piece of straw. The two last-named items were her substitutes for pencils.

"Her circles were made by dipping the end of a piece of cane of the required size into the blacking, and making its impression on the skin; while an end of the straw, bent to the proper length, and likewise blackened, marked all the lines, squares, diamonds, &c., which were to be of equal length. Her design being thus completed, she worked away on it with her pin, which she dug in as far as the thin part would enter, keeping the supply of blacking sufficient, and going over the same ground repeatedly to insure regularity and unity in the lines. With some persons the first effect of this tattooing is to produce a considerable amount of fever, from the irritation caused by the punctures, especially so with the ladies, from the extent of surface thus rendered sore. To allay this irritation, they are generally obliged to remain for a few days in a case of vegetable matter, which is plastered all over them in the form of a sort of green poultice.

"A scab forms over the tattooing, which should not be picked off, but allowed to fall off of itself. When this disappears, the operation is complete, and the marks are indelible; nay, more, the Abyssinians declare that they may be traced on the person's bones even after death has bared them of their fleshy covering."

The women also wear a vast number of silver ornaments, such as several chains round the neck, three pairs of silver or gilt bracelets, a number of little silver ornaments hung like bells to the ankles, above which are a series of bangles of the same metal. A wealthy woman has also a large flat silver case, containing talismans, and ornamented with bells of the same metal, suspended by four silver chains; while her hair is decorated with a large silver pin, elaborately made, and furnished with a number of pendent ornaments.

The accompanying illustration exhibits the costume of an Abyssinian lady, and the difference in dress between herself and her servants. The latter—who, of course, are her slaves, no other idea of servitude entering the Abyssinian mind—are washing clothes in a brook, in preparation for the Feast of St. John, the only day in the year when the Abyssinians trouble themselves to wash either their clothes or themselves. Other slaves are carrying water-jars on their backs—not on their heads; and in the foreground stands



WASHING-DAY

their mistress giving her orders. The reader will note the graceful way in which the mantle is put on, and the string of leathern amulet cases which hangs by her side.

As to the hair itself, it is dressed in a peculiar manner. It is gathered into a multitude of plaits, beginning at the very top of the head, and falling as low as the neck. Both sexes have the hair plaited in this manner, but the men wear their plaits in various ways. According to strict Abyssinian etiquette, which has greatly faded in later years, a youth who has not distinguished himself ought to wear his hair unplaited. As soon as he has killed a man in battle, he shaves his head, with the exception of a single plait, and for every additional victim a fresh plait is added. When he kills the fifth, he is allowed to wear the whole of his hair in tresses.

This mode of dressing the hair occupies a vast amount of time, but time is of no value to an Abyssinian, who expends several hours upon his head once every fortnight or so. The plaits are held in their places by a sort of fixture made of boiled cotton-seeds, and are plentifully saturated with butter. Vast quantities of this latter article are consumed in Abyssinian toilettes, and it is considered a mark of fashion to place a large pat of butter on the top of the head before going out in the morning, and to allow it to be melted by the heat of the sun and run over the hair. Of course it drips from the ends of the long tresses on the neck and clothes of the wearer, but such stains are considered as marks of wealth. Sometimes it runs over the face, and is apt to get into the eyes, so that in hot weather the corner of the quarry is largely used in wiping away the trickling butter.

In order to preserve the arrangement of the hair during the night, they use instead of a pillow a sort of short crutch, looking very like a common scraper with a rounded top.

CHAPTER LXV.

ABYSSINIA—*Continued.*

GOVERNMENT OF ABYSSINIA—THE EMPEROR AND HIS ORNEALOOY—THE THREE DISTRICTS AND THEIR RULERS—THE MINOR CHIEFS AND THEIR DISTINGUISHING EMBLEMS—KING THEODORE—A BRIEF SKETCH OF HIS LIFE—CAREER FROM THE RANKS TO THE THRONE—HIS ATTEMPTS AT REFORM—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—A MODERN SOLOMON—MODES OF PUNISHMENT—THE LADIES' GAME—ABYSSINIAN PLEADING—THE TRIAL BY WAGER—QUARRELSOME CHARACTER OF THE ABYSSINIANS—THEIR VANITY AND BOASTFULNESS—THE LAW OF DEBT—HOSPITALITY AND ITS DUTIES—COOKERY AND MODES OF EATING—THE RAW FLESH FEAST—PEPPER SAUCE—THE USE OF THE SHOTEL—A WEDDING FEAST—ABYSSINIAN DIOESTION.

The government of the Abyssinians has varied several times, but has mostly settled down into a sort of divided monarchy.

There is an emperor, supreme king, or Negust, who must be a lineal descendant of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, and who must be crowned by the high priest or Abuna, an ecclesiastic who corresponds very nearly with the Greek Patriarch. Mostly, the king holds but nominal sway over the fierce and insubordinate chiefs of provinces, and, as is likely, the fiercest, cleverest, and most unscrupulous chief generally contrives to manage the king much as he likes. Should the king be strong-minded enough to hold his own opinions, the chiefs become dissatisfied, and by degrees fall into a state of chronic rebellion, as was the case during the last years of Theodore's life.

Each of the great districts has its own Ras, chief, or prince, according to the title that may be used, and his authority is absolute in his own province. The Ras appoints under him a number of great chiefs, who bear the title of Dejasmach (commonly contracted into Dejatch), corresponding in some degree with our ducal rank. Under these great chiefs are lesser officers, and each of them is appointed by beat of the great drum of ceremony and proclamation by the heralds. Men so appointed have the privilege of drums beating before them on a march or in battle, and their rank, that of "addy negarie," or men of honour, confers the same practical power as that of Dejasmach, the title alone being wanting.

It may be as well to mention that the late King Theodore held the title of Dejasmach before he had himself named King of Ethiopia; and as the history of this remarkable man gives some idea of the Abyssinian mode of government, a very brief sketch will be given of his progress to the throne.

Putting together the various histories that have appeared, and rejecting their many discrepancies, we come to the following series of events.

Kassai, for such was his name before he changed it to Theodorus, was the son of a very small chief named Hailu Weleda Georgis, whose only distinction seems to have been his reputed descent from the Queen of Sheba, a tradition of which Kassai afterwards took advantage. When he died, his little property was seized by his relations, and his widow was forced to support herself by selling the "kosso," the popular remedy for the tape-

worm, a creature which is singularly prevalent in this country. Kassai, then a boy, took refuge in a monastery, where he might have remained until this day, had not a Dejasmatch, who had turned rebel after their custom, attacked the monastery, burned the huts of which it was composed, and killed the boys who inhabited it by way of avenging himself on their parents. Kassai, however, escaped the massacre, and fled to a powerful and warlike relation, the Dejasmatch Coufu, under whom he learned the management of arms, and as much of the art of war as was known.

His uncle however died, and his two sons immediately fought for the patrimony; and, while they were quarrelling, another powerful Dejasmatch saw his opportunity, swept down suddenly upon them, and made himself master of the best and most fertile part of the district.

Again ejected from a home, Kassai contrived to get together a band of followers, whom we should not wrong very greatly by calling robbers, and for some years lived a wandering life marvellously resembling that of David in his earlier years. By degrees his band increased until some of the petty chiefs joined him with their followers, and he became a man of such importance that the well-known Waisoro Mennen, the crafty and ambitious mother of Ras Ali, finding that he could not be beaten in the field, gave him in marriage the daughter of the Ras. She, however, proved a faithful wife to him, and would have nothing to do with the schemes of her grandmother. At last Kassai and Waisoro Mennen came to an open rupture, and fought a battle, in which the former was victorious, and captured both the lady and her fine province of Dembea. The latter he kept, but the former he set at liberty.

Ras Ali then tried to rid himself of his troublesome son-in-law by assigning Dembea to Berru Goshu, a powerful Dejasmatch, who accordingly invaded the district, and drove Kassai out of it. This happened in 1850. In less than two years, however, Kassai reorganized an army, attacked the camp of Berru Goshu, shot him with his own hand, and got back his province. Thinking that matters were now becoming serious, Ras Ali took the field in person and marched against Kassai, who conquered him, drove him among the Gallas for safety, and took possession of the whole of Amhara.

Having secured this splendid prize, he sent to Ras Oubi, the Prince of Tigré, and demanded tribute. Oubi refused, led his army against Kassai, and lost both his province and his liberty. The conqueror kept him in prison until 1860, when his first wife died, and he married the daughter of Oubi, whom he released and made a tributary vassal.

Being now practically master of the whole country, he sent for Abba Salama, the then Ahuna or Patriarch, and had himself crowned by the title of Theodorus, King of the kings of Ethiopia. This event took place in 1855; and from that time to his death Theodore maintained his supremacy, his astonishing personal authority keeping in check the fierce and rebellious spirits by whom he was surrounded. How he really tried to do the best for his country we all know. Semi-savage as he was by nature, he possessed many virtues, and, had he known his epoch better, would still have been on the throne, the ruler of a contented instead of a rebellious people. But he was too far ahead of his age. He saw the necessity for reforms, and impatiently tried to force them on the people, instead of gently paving the way for them. The inevitable results followed, and Theodore's mind at last gave way under the cares of empire and the continual thwartings of his many schemes. Still, even to the last he never lost his self-reliance nor his splendid courage, and, though the balance of his mind was gone, and he alternated between acts of singular kindness and savage cruelty, he fought to the last, and not until he was deserted by his soldiers did he die by his own hand at the entrance of his stronghold.

He saw very clearly that the only way to establish a consolidated kingdom was to break the power of the great chiefs or princes. This he did by the simple process of putting them in chains until they yielded their executive powers, and contented themselves rather with the authority of generals than of irresponsible rulers. He was also desirous of doing away with the custom that made every man an armed soldier, and wished to substitute a paid standing army for the miscellaneous horde of armed men that filled the country. He was anxious to promote agriculture, and, according to his own words, not

only to turn swords into reaping-hooks—a very easy thing, by the way, with an Abyssinian sword—but to make a ploughing-ox more valuable than a war-horse. To his own branch of the Church he was deeply attached, and openly said that he had a mission to drive Islamism from his country, and for that reason was at war with the Gallas, who, as well as the Shooas and other tribes, profess the religion of Mohammed. That being done, he intended to march and raze to the ground Mecca and Medina, the two sacred cities of Islam; and even projected a march to Jerusalem itself.

His most difficult task, however, was the suppression of the immorality that reigns throughout Abyssinia, and which, according to Mr. Parkyns, has a curious effect on the manners of the people. Neither men nor women seem to have any idea that the least shame can be attached to inmorality, and the consequence is that both in word and



THEODORE AND THE LIONS.

manner they are perfectly decorous. To cope with so ingrained a vice seems an impracticable task, and such it turned out to be. He set the example to his people by only taking one wife, and when she died he had many scruples about the legality of taking another, and did not do so until after consultation with European friends and careful examination of the Bible. He could not, however, keep up the fight against nature, and in his last years he had resorted to the old custom of the harem.

As the reader would probably like to see what kind of a man was this Theodorus, I give a portrait taken from a sketch made of him while he was in the enjoyment of perfect health of body and mind, and while he was the irresponsible ruler of his country, knowing of none greater than himself, and having his mind filled with schemes of conquest of other lands, and reform of his own. The portrait was taken by M. Lejean,

some ten years before the death of Theodorus ; and, in spite of the loss of his hair, which he wore short in the last years of his life, and of the ravages which time, anxiety, and misdirected zeal had made in his features, the face is essentially the same as that of the dead man who lay within the gates of Magdala on the fatal Good Friday of 1868.

Knowing the character of the people over whom he reigned, Theodore made liberal use of external accessories for the purpose of striking awe into them, such as magnificent robes and weapons adorned with the precious metals. Among the most valued of these accessories were four tame lions, of which he was very fond. These animals travelled about with him, and even lived in the same stable with the horses, never being chained or shut up in cages, but allowed to walk about in perfect liberty. They were as tame and docile as dogs, and M. Lejean states that the only objection to them was the over-demonstrative affection of their manners. Like cats they delighted to be noticed and made much of, and were apt to become unpleasantly importunate in soliciting caresses.

They were, however, somewhat short-tempered when travelling over the mountain ranges, the cold weather of those elevated regions making them uncomfortable and snappish. With an idea of impressing his subjects with his importance, an act in which he was eminently successful, Theodore was accustomed to have his lions with him when he gave audience, and the accompanying portrait was taken from a sketch of the Lion of Abyssinia seated in the audience-chamber, and surrounded with the living emblems of the title which he bore, and which he perpetuated in his royal seal.

JUSTICE is administered in various modes, sometimes by the will of the chief, and sometimes by a sort of court or council of elders. The former process is generally of a very summary character, and is based on the old Mosaic principle of an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. If one man murders another, for example, and the culprit be detected, the Ras will direct the nearest relation of the murderer to kill him in precisely the same manner that he killed his victim. One very odd case was investigated by Oubi, the Ras or Prince of Tigré.

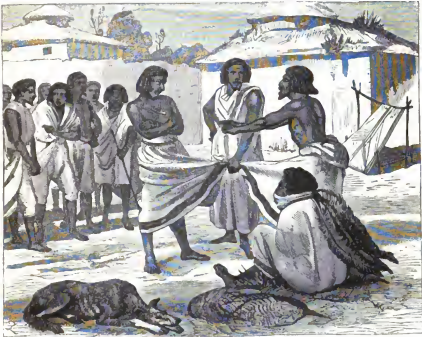
Two little boys, the elder eight and the younger five years of age, had been walking together, when they saw a tree laden with fruit. After some difficulty, the elder climbed into the tree, and, standing on a branch, plucked the fruit and threw it to his little companion who stood below him. By some accident or other he fell from the tree upon the head of his playfellow, and killed him on the spot. The parents of the poor child insisted that the boy who killed him should be arraigned for murder, and, after a vast amount of consultation, he was found guilty. Ras Oubi then gave sentence. The culprit was to stand under the branch exactly where had stood the poor little boy. The eldest brother was then to climb up the tree and fall on the other boy's head until he killed him.

Theft is generally punished with flogging, the whip being a most formidable weapon, made of hide, and called, from its length and weight, the "giraffe." A thief is sometimes taken into the market-place, stripped to the waist, and led by two men, while a third delivers a terrific series of blows with the giraffe whip. After each blow the delinquent is forced to exclaim, "All ye who see me thus, profit by my example."

Many other offences, such as sacrilege, rebellion, and the like, are punished by the loss of a hand or a foot, sometimes of both. The forfeited member is amputated in a very clumsy way, with a small curved knife, so that a careless or maladroit executioner can inflict frightful suffering. The culprit generally gives a fee to the executioner, who will then put as keen an edge as possible on the knife, and tell the sufferer how to arrange his hand, and spread his fingers, so that the tendons may be stretched, and the joint separated easily. One man of rank, who had been condemned to lose his left hand, suffered the operation without moving a muscle of his countenance, and when the hand was severed, he took it up with his right, and flung it in the face of the presiding chief, with the exclamation that he still had a hand wherewith to fling a spear. With the same equanimity he dipped the bleeding stump into the boiling oil which is generally used as a styptic. Sometimes, however, the use of the hot oil is forbidden, and the sufferer is left to bleed to death.

The Abyssinians, however, are as little sensitive to pain as most African tribes, and endure with ease injuries which would kill a European. The young men have a curious amusement, which well exemplifies their insensibility to pain. "When a party of young men are seated together, the ladies present will bring bits of the pith of millet stems, cut to about an inch long, and of the thickness of a man's thumb, or, what is better still, pieces of old rag, rolled tight, so as to form a pellet of similar dimensions. These are arranged in patterns by each lady on the extended arm of any one whom she may choose, and their tops lighted.

"The only merit in the man is to allow them to burn themselves out entirely, without moving his arm so as to cause them to fall, or evincing the slightest consciousness of pain either by word, look, or gesture. On the contrary, he must continue a flow of agree-



PLEADERS

able conversation, as if nothing were occurring. The lady operator usually blows her fires to keep them going, and the material, whether pith or rag, being of a very porous nature, and burning slowly like tinder, the action of the fire is felt on the skin long before it actually reaches it. It is, in fact, an operation similar to the 'moxa' of European surgery. When the pellets are completely burned out, the lady rubs her hand roughly over the cauterized parts, so as to remove the burnt skin. On a copper-coloured person the scars, when well healed, assume a polished black surface, which contrasts very prettily with the surrounding skin."

The courts of justice, to which allusion has been made, are composed of elders; or not unfrequently the chief of the district acts as the magistrate. When two persons fall into a dispute and bring it before the court, an officer comes for the litigants, and ties

together the corner of their quarries. Holding them by the knot, he leads them before the magistrate, where each is at liberty to plead his own cause. From the moment that the knot is tied, neither is allowed to speak, under penalty of a heavy fine, until they have come before the magistrate; and when the trial has begun, the plaintiff has the first right of speech, followed by the defendant in reply. Neither is allowed to interrupt the other under pain of a fine; but, in compassion to the weakness of human nature, the non-speaker may grunt if he likes when the adversary makes any statement that displeases him.

The oddest part of the proceeding is the custom of betting, or rather paying forfeits, on the result of the investigation. A plaintiff, for example, offers to bet one, two, or more mules, and the defendant feels himself bound to accept the challenge, though he may sometimes modify the amount of the bet. When the case is determined, the loser pays the sum, not to the winner, but to the chief who decides the case. A "mule," by the way, does not necessarily mean the animal, but the word is used conventionally to represent a certain sum of money, so that a "mule" means ten dollars, just as among English sporting men a "pony" signifies £25.

This practice is carried on to such an extent that Mr. Parkyns has seen ten mules betted upon the payment of a small quantity of corn, worth only two or three shillings. The object of the "bet" seems to be that the offer binds the opposite party to carry out the litigation, and when it is offered, the chief forces the loser to pay under the penalty of being put in chains.

It may be seen from the foregoing observations that the Abyssinians are rather a quarrelsome people. This arises chiefly from their vanity, which is extreme, and which culminates to its highest point when the brain is excited and the tongue loosened by drink. It was this national characteristic which induced King Theodore to imagine himself the equal of any monarch on the face of the earth, and to fancy that he could cope successfully with the power of England.

Mr. Mansfield Parkyns gives a very amusing account of this national failing.

"Vanity is one of the principal besetting sins of the Abyssinians, and it is to this weakness, when brought out by liquor, that the origin of most of their quarrels may be traced. I remember more than once to have heard a remark something like the following made by one of two men who, from being 'my dear friends,' had chosen to sit next to each other at table: 'You're a very good fellow, and my very dear friend; but (hiccup) you aren't half so brave or handsome as I am!' The 'very dear friend' denies the fact in a tone of voice denoting anything but amity, and states that his opinion is exactly the reverse. The parties warm in the argument; words, as is usual when men are in such a state, are bandied about without any measure, and often without much meaning; insults follow; then blows; and if the parties round them be in a similar condition to themselves, and do not immediately separate them, it frequently happens that swords are drawn.

"Dangerous wounds or death are the consequence; or, as is not uncommon, others of the party, siding with the quarrellers, probably with the idea of settling the affair, are induced to join in the row, which in the end becomes a general engagement. I have noticed this trait of vanity as exhibiting itself in various ways in a drunken Abyssinian. I always found that the best plan for keeping a man quiet, when in this state, was to remark to him that it was unbecoming in a great man to behave in such a way, that people of rank were dignified and reserved in their manners and conversation.

"And thus I have argued very successfully with my own servants on more than one occasion, flattering them while they were tipsy, and then paying them off with a five-foot male bamboo when they got sober again.

"I recollect one fellow who was privileged, for he had asked my leave to go to a party and get drunk. On returning home in the evening, he staggered into my room in as dignified a manner as he could, and, seating himself beside me on my couch, embraced me with tears in his eyes, made me a thousand protestations of attachment and affection, offering to serve me in any way he could, but never by a single expression evincing that he considered me as other than a dear friend, and that indeed in rather a patronising

fashion, although the same fellow was in the habit of washing my feet, and kissing them afterwards, every evening, and would, if sober, have no more thought of seating himself, even on the ground, in my presence, than of jumping over the moon.

"With his fellow-servants, too, he acted similarly; for though he knew them all, and their characters and positions, he addressed them as his servants, ordering them about, and upbraiding them for sundry peccadilloes which they had doubtless committed, and which thus came to my knowledge. In fact, in every point he acted to perfection the manners and language of a great man; and so often have I seen the same mimicry, that it has led me to believe that the chief mental employment of the lowest fellow in the country is building castles in the air, and practising to himself how he would act, and what he would say, if he were a great man."

The law of debt is a very severe one. The debtor is thrown into prison, and chained to the wall by the wrist. The ring that encloses the wrist is a broad hoop or bracelet of iron, which is forced asunder far enough to permit the hand to enter, and is then hammered together tightly enough to prevent the hand from being withdrawn. After a while, if the sum be not paid, the bracelet is hammered a little tighter; and so the creditor continues to tighten the iron until it is driven into the flesh, the course of the blood checked, and the hand finally destroyed by mortification.

Should the Government be the creditor for unpaid tribute, a company of soldiers is quartered on the debtor, and he is obliged to feed them with the best of everything under pain of brutal ill-treatment. Of course this mode of enforcing payment often has the opposite effect, and, when a heavy tax has been proclaimed in a district, the people run away *en masse* from the villages. In such a case the head-man of the village is responsible for the entire amount, and sometimes is obliged to make his escape with as much portable property as he can manage to carry off.

WHEN rightly managed, the Abyssinians are a hospitable people. Some travellers take a soldier with them, and demand food and lodging. These of course are given, through fear, but without a welcome. The right mode is, that when a traveller comes to a village, he sits under a tree, and waits. The villagers soon gather round him, question him, and make remarks on his appearance with perfect candour. After he has undergone this ordeal, some one is sure to ask him to his house, and, should he happen to be a person of distinction, one of the chief men is certain to be his host.

When Mr. Parkyns was residing in Abyssinia, he always adopted this plan. On one occasion the head-man invited him to his house, and treated him most hospitably, apologising for the want of better food on the ground that he had lately been made liable for the tribute of a number of persons who had run away, and was consequently much reduced in the world. It proved that sixteen householders had escaped to avoid the tax, and that the unfortunate man had to pay the whole of it, amounting to a sum which forced him to sell his horse, mule, and nearly all his plough-oxen, and, even when he was entertaining his visitor, he was in dread lest the soldiers should be quartered on him.

The question of hospitality naturally leads us to the cooking and mode of eating as practised in Abyssinia, about which so many strange stories have been told. We have all heard of Bruce's account of the eating of raw meat cut from the limbs of a living bullock, and of the storm of derision which was raised by the tale. We will see how far he was borne out by facts.

The "staff of life" is prepared in Abyssinia much after the same fashion as in other parts of Africa, the grain being ground between two stones, and then made into a sort of very thin paste, about the consistency of gruel. This paste is allowed to remain in a jar for a day and night in order to become sour, and is then taken to the oven. This is a very curious article, being a slab of earthenware in which a concave hollow is made, and furnished with a small cover of the same material. A fire is made beneath the oven, or "magogo," as it is termed, and when it is hot the baker, who is always a woman, proceeds to work.

She first rubs the hollow with an oily seed in order to prevent the bread from adhering to it, and then with a gourd ladle takes some of the thin dough from the jar.

The gourd holds exactly enough to make one loaf, or rather cake. With a rapid movement the woman spreads the dough over the entire hollow, and then puts on the cover. In two or three minutes it is removed, and the bread is peeled off in one flat circular piece, some eighteen inches in width, and about the eighth of an inch in thickness. This bread, called "teff," is the ordinary diet of an Abyssinian. It is very sour, very soft, and very spongy, and requires an experienced palate to appreciate it. There are several other kinds of bread, but the teff is that which is most valued.

As to the meat diet of the Abyssinians, it may be roughly divided into cooked and uncooked meat. Cooked meat is usually prepared from the least valued parts of the animal. It is cut up into little pieces, and stewed in a pot together with other ingredients, a considerable quantity of butter, and such an amount of capsicum pods that the whole mess is of a light red colour, and a drop of it leaves a red stain on any garment



DINNER PARTY.

on which it may happen to fall. This paste is called "dillikh," and is made by grinding together a quantity of capsicum pods and an equal amount of onions, to which are added ginger, salt, black pepper, and other herbs, according to the taste of the preparer.

The poorer class, who cannot afford meat, can still make dillikh paste, and live almost entirely on teff, clotted milk, and dillikh.

But the great treat for an Abyssinian epicure is the "broundo," or raw meat, about which he is as fastidious as the European *bon vivant* about his sauces and ragouts. Not an Abyssinian will eat any animal which has incisor teeth in its upper jaw, and, like the Jews, they even reject the camel, because it has not a cloven hoof.

According to the account given by Bruce, when a dinner party is assembled, a cow is brought to the door of the house, bound, flung down, and a few drops of its blood poured on the ground in order to save the letter of the Mosaic law. The butchers then cut large strips of meat from the poor beast, taking care to avoid the vital parts and larger vessels, and managing so as to remove the flesh without much effusion of blood.

The still warm flesh is taken within the house, where it is sliced into strips by the men, and handed to the women who sit by their side. The women cut it up into small

squares, lay it on the "teff" bread, season it plentifully with the dillikh paste, roll it up into balls, and push the balls into the mouth of their companion, who eats until he is satisfied, and then reciprocates the attention by making up a couple of similar balls, and putting them into the mouths of the women.

Mead and tedge are then consumed as largely as the meat, and, according to Bruce, a scene of the most abominable licentiousness accompanies the conclusion of the festival.

These statements have been much controverted, but there is no doubt that, in the main, the narrative of Bruce was a truthful one. Many of the facts of which he wrote have since been corroborated, while the changes to which Abyssinia has been subjected will account for unimportant variations. Later travellers, for example, have not witnessed such a scene as has been narrated by Bruce, but that is no reason why such a scene should not have occurred. The most important part of it, namely, the eating of raw flesh, has been repeatedly corroborated, especially by Mansfield Parkyns, who lived so long with the Abyssinians, dressed like them, fed like them, and accommodated himself in most respects to their mode of life.

He found that meat was always, if possible, eaten in the raw state, only the inferior qualities being made fit for consumption by cookery. His description of the mode of eating tallies exactly with that of Bruce. The meat is always brought to the consumer while still warm and quivering with life, as it becomes tough and stringy when suffered to become cold. Each guest is furnished with plenty of teff and the invariable pepper sauce. His fingers take the place of a fork, and his sword, or shotel, does duty for a knife. Holding the broadsword in his left hand, he takes into his capacious mouth as much as it can accommodate, and then, with an adroit upward stroke of the sword, severs the piece of meat, and just contrives to avoid cutting off his nose. He alternates the pieces of meat with teff and dillikh, and, when he has finished, refreshes himself copiously with drink.

Such food as this appears to be indescribably disgusting, and very unfit for a nation that prides itself on its Christianity. Many persons, indeed, have said that no one *could* eat raw meat except when pressed by starvation, and have therefore discredited all accounts of the practice.

Perhaps my readers may remember that after Bruce's return a gentleman was making very merry with this account in the traveller's presence, treating the whole story as a fabrication, on the ground that to eat raw meat was impossible. Bruce said nothing, but quietly left the room, and presently returned with a piece of beef rolled and peppered after the Abyssinian fashion, and gave his astonished opponent the choice of eating the meat or fighting him on the spot. As Bruce was of gigantic strength and stature, and an accomplished swordsman to boot, the meat was eaten, and the fact proved to be possible.

Mr. Parkyns, who, when in Abyssinia, very wisely did as the Abyssinians do, found that he soon became accustomed to the taste of raw meat, and learned how to prefer one part of an animal to another. He discovered that a very good imitation of an oyster could be made by chopping up a sheep's liver very fine, and seasoning it with pepper, vinegar, and a little salt, provided that the consumer shut his eyes while eating it. He even learned to appreciate a dish called chogera, which seems to be about the very acme of abomination. It consists of the liver and stomach chopped up fine, mixed with a little of the half-digested grass found in the stomach, flavoured with the contents of the gall bladder, plentifully seasoned with pepper, salt, and onions, and eaten uncooked.

An Abyssinian's digestion is marvellous, and almost rivals that of a pike, which will digest half of a fish in its stomach while the other half is protruding from its mouth. He will go to any number of feasts in a day, and bring a fine fresh appetite to each of them, consuming at a meal a quantity that would suffice seven or eight hungry Englishmen. Mr. Parkyns once gave a breakfast to fourteen guests, thinking that, as they were engaged for three or four other feasts on the same day, they would perhaps eat but little.

Keeping up, however, the old hospitable customs, he killed a cow and two fat sheep, and provided many gallons of mead and an infinite quantity of "teff." To his astonishment, the whole of this enormous supply vanished, as he says, "like smoke" before his guests, who left scarcely a scrap for their servants. And, after this feast, the whole of

the party proceeded to another house, where they were treated in a similarly liberal manner, and employed the day in a series of four or five such banquets.

The Abyssinians are very fastidious respecting the part of the animal from which the *broundo* is cut, and have a vast number of names to express the different qualities of meat. The most valued portion is the hump of the shoulder, the first cut of which is always given to the man of the highest rank. Consequently, when several men of nearly equal rank meet, a polite controversy is carried on for some time, each offering the cut of honour to his neighbour.

On one occasion this piece of etiquette produced fatal results. Several Amhara chiefs were present, together with one Tigrean. The latter, in order to assert the superiority of his own province, drew his sword and helped himself to the first cut, whereupon he was immediately challenged by two Amhara warriors. He accepted the challenge, fought them both, killed them both, and so vindicated the course which he had taken.

The quantity which an Abyssinian will eat when he gets the chance must be seen to be appreciated. See for example Mr. Parkyns' account of a feast at an Abyssinian wedding:—

"The Abyssinian guests were squatted round the tables in long rows, feeding as if their lives depended on the quantity they could devour, and washing it down with floods of drink. I never could have believed that any people could take so much food, and certainly, if the reader wishes to see a curious exhibition in the feeding line, he has only to run over to Abyssinia, and be present at a wedding-feast.

"Imagine two or three hundred half-naked men and women all in one room, eating and drinking in the way I have described in a former chapter, but with this difference—that the private party is well ordered and arranged, while the public 'hang-out' is a scene of the most terrible confusion. Here all decorum is lost sight of; and you see the waiters, each with a huge piece of raw beef in his hands, rushing frantically to and fro in his desire to satisfy the voracious appetites of the guests, who, as he comes within their reach, grasp the meat, and with their long crooked swords hack off a lump or strip, as the case may be, in their eagerness not to lose their share.

"One man was reported on this occasion to have eaten 'tallak' and 'tamash' of raw beef (each weighing from four to five pounds) and seven cakes of bread, and to have drunk twenty-six pints of beer and 'tedge.' From what I saw I can believe a good deal, but this appears rather a 'stretcher.'

"We of the Frank sect were presented with our share of the 'broundo;' but as our thoughtful host had informed us that a dinner, cooked by his own hands in the Turkish style, was awaiting us in an inner apartment, we merely, for formality's sake, tasted the offered delicacies, and then handed them over to our servants, who, standing behind us, were ready enough to make away with them. The silversmith Michael, before coming to the feast, had, it would appear, been pouring a tolerably copious libation to some god or other, for he was considerably elevated, and, being anxious to show off, commenced eating in the Abyssinian fashion, nor did he stop until he had cut a large gash in his nose."

The hands are always carefully washed both before and after a meal. Just before the feast is over, the servants come round with baskets to the guests, each of whom places in the basket a portion of his food. As to the little boys, they crawl about under the tables, and among the legs of the guests, and are always ready for any fragments that may be accidentally dropped or intentionally given to them.

The beer, or "tedge," and mead, which have been mentioned, are favorite drinks among the Abyssinians. The former is very thick and gruel-like, and to a European is very repulsive. The latter, however, is tolerably good, and is kept carefully in large jars. The mouth of each jar is covered with a piece of cotton cloth drawn tightly over it. This is not removed when the mead is poured out, and acts as a strainer.

CHAPTER LXVI.

ABYSSINIA—*Continued.*

BIRTH, LIFE, AND DEATH OF THE ABYSSINIANS—CEREMONIES AT BIRTH—THE CIRCUMCISION AND BAPTISM—CARE AS TO THE EXACT DATE OF EACH RITE—MARRIAGE, CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS, AND THEIR DIFFERENT CHARACTERS—THE CIVIL MARRIAGE AND ITS ATTENDANT CEREMONIES—DEATH AND FUNERAL—SHAPE OF THE GRAVE—THE HIBED MOURNERS—THE SUCCESSIVE COMMEMORATIONS OF THE DEAD—RAISING THE HAI-HO—THE RELIGION OF ABYSSINIA—FASTING AND FEASTING BOTH CARRIED TO EXTREMES—ST. JOHN'S DAY AND THE ANNUAL WASHING—FRIENDLY SKIRMISHES—ABYSSINIAN CHURCHES—THE SANCTUARY AND THE ARK—THE ARK IN BATTLE—IGNORANCE OF THE PRIESTHOOD—THE BIBLE A SEALED BOOK TO PRIESTS AND LAYMEN—LIFE OF A SAINT—SUPERSTITION—TRANSFORMATION—THE BOUDA AND THE TIGRITIYA—EXAMPLES SEEN BY MR. PARKYNS—ABYSSINIAN ARCHITECTURE.

WE will now cursorily glance at the life of an Abyssinian from his birth to his funeral.

As soon as the birth of a child is expected, all the men leave the house, as they would be considered as polluted if they were under the same roof, and would not be allowed to enter a church for forty days. The women take immediate charge of the new comer, wash and perfume it, and mould its little features in order to make them handsome. Should it be a boy, it is held up to the window until a warrior thrusts a lance into the room and pokes it into the child's mouth, this ceremony being supposed to make it courageous. The throat of a fowl is then cut in front of the child, and the women utter their joy-cries—twelve times for a boy and three times for a girl. They then rush tumultuously out of the house, and try to catch the men. If they succeed, they hustle their captives about, and force them to ransom themselves by a jar of mead, or some such present.

Next come the religious ceremonies; and it is not the least curious point in the religious system of the Abyssinians that they have retained the Jewish rite, to which they super-added Christian baptism. Eight days after birth the child is circumcised, twenty days afterwards the priests enter the house, and perform a purification service which restores it to general use, and forty days afterwards the baptism takes place, should the child be a boy, and eighty days if a girl. A plaited cord of red, blue, and white silk is then placed round the child's neck, as a token that it has been baptized, which is afterwards exchanged for the blue cord, or "match," worn by all Christian Abyssinians. There is a curious law that, if either of the sponsors should die without issue, his godchild becomes the heir to his property.

The priests are very particular about the date of the baptism. They believe that Adam and Eve did not receive the spirit of life until they had been created forty and eighty days. Should the father miscalculate the date, he would be sentenced to a year's fasting; while the priest is liable to a similar penalty if he should happen to assign the wrong day.

As to their marriages, the Abyssinians manage them very easily. As soon as betrothal takes place, which is mostly at a very early age, the couple are not allowed to see each other, even though they may have enjoyed the greatest liberty beforehand. So rigidly is

this practice carried out in Tigré, that the bride never leaves her father's house until her marriage, believing that if she did so she would be bitten by a snake.

Just before the wedding-day, a "dass," or marquee, is built of stakes and reeds for the reception of the wedding-party, in which the marriage-feast is prepared. Certain distinguished guests have special places reserved for them; but any one is at liberty to enter and eat to his heart's content. A scene of great turmoil always occurs on these occasions, a crowd of men who have already been fed trying to gain re-admission, whilst another crowd of hungry applicants is fighting and pushing towards the entrance. Order is kept to some extent by a number of young men who volunteer their services, and are allowed to exercise their office as they think best, hitting about at the married couple by a priest, should one happen to be present; if not, by an elder; and the actual ceremony is at an end.

After the feast, the bride is carried in upon a man's back, and put down, like a sack of coals, on a stool. Music and dancing then take place, while the bridegroom, attended by his groomsmen, or "arkees," is proceeding to the house, accompanied by his friends, and preceded by music. When he arrives, the marriage—which is a civil rather than a religious ceremony—takes place, an address being delivered to the married couple by a priest, should one happen to be present; if not, by an elder; and the actual ceremony is at an end.

The arkees have a number of curious offices to perform, among which is the custom of collecting gifts for the newly-married couple, begging with songs and drum-beating before the houses. If nothing be given them, they take it; and after a wedding the robberies are countless, the arkees being privileged persons during their term of office. They are even allowed to perjure themselves—a crime which is held in the deepest abhorrence by all Abyssinian Christians. Should a person from whom anything is stolen offer a present as a ransom, the arkees are obliged to give up the stolen property; but should they have taken fowl or any other edibles, there is no restitution possible, the arkees taking care to have them cooked and eaten at once.

Such marriages, being merely civil ceremonies, are dissolved as easily as they are made, the slightest pretext on either side being considered as sufficient for the separation. Should there be children, the father takes the boys, and the mother the girls, and each will probably marry again almost immediately.

In consequence of this very easy arrangement, it often happens that, in one family of children, two may be by one mother, two by another, and one or two more by a third; and it is almost invariably the case that the children of one father by different mothers hate each other cordially, while the children of one mother by different fathers live together in amity.

Besides these civil marriages, which are really no marriages at all, there are ecclesiastical marriages, which are held to be indissoluble. These, however, are very seldom contracted except between persons who have been civilly married, and have found, after many years of experience, that they cannot be better suited. They therefore go to the church, are married by the priest, and receive the Communion together.

When an Abyssinian dies, the funeral takes place within a very short time, the same day being preferred if possible. The death being announced from the house-top by the relatives, and by messengers to the neighbouring villages, a grave is at once dug by volunteers. There are no professional grave-diggers in Abyssinia, but, as the act of burying the dead is considered as a meritorious one, plenty of assistance is always found. The body is then placed on a couch and carried to the grave, the whole of the Psalter being repeated as the procession makes its way. Six halts are made during the progress of the body to the church, at each of which incense is burned over it, and certain portions of the Scriptures are read, or rather gabbled, as fast as the words can be repeated. In order to save time, each priest or scribe who is present has a certain portion assigned to him, and they all read at once, so that not a word can be caught by the mourners. These, however, are making such a noise on their own account that they do not trouble themselves about hearing the Scriptures.

The bearers of the corpse manage so that their seventh halt is made at the church gate. Here more portions of Scripture are read in the same time-saving fashion, while the body is wrapped in a cloth made of palm-leaves, this being emblematical of the palms thrown before our Lord on His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. When the grave is ready, the priest descends into it and censes it, after which the body is lowered and the earth filled in.

In consequence of the rapidity with which burial follows death, the mourning ceremonies are postponed for three days, so as to give time for assembling the mourners, and making the corresponding preparations.

On that day the mourners proceed to a spot near the church, on which is placed a couch containing a rude figure of a human being, supposed to represent the deceased person. The relations appear with their heads shaven like those of the priests, and among the Tigréans they rub their foreheads and temples with the borders of their robes until they take off the skin, and produce sores which often occupy many weeks in healing. Mostly the injury is so great, that when the skin is renewed it is blacker than the rest of the body, and remains so during life, giving to the face a very singular expression. The Amharas do not employ this mode of showing their grief.

Each of the mourners then advances, and pronounces a sort of eulogy on the deceased, generally uttering their panegyrics in a sort of rude verse. In case, however, the relatives should not be good poets, a number of professional mourners attend the funeral, some being hired, but the greater number coming merely in hope of a fee and a share in the funeral banquet which concludes the proceedings. According to Mr. Parkyns, these people will give minute details of the history of the dead man, his deeds, character, and even his property; and this to a great length, thus: "O Gabron, son of Welda Mousa, grandson of Ita Garra Raphael, &c. &c.; rider of the bay horse with white feet, and of the grey ambling mule; owner of the Damascus barrel-gun, and bearer of the silver-mounted shield, why have you left us?" &c., entering with astonishing readiness into every particular of the deceased's life and actions. All the bystanders, at the end of each verse, break in with a chorus of sobbing lamentations, adapted to a mournful chant, "Moni! wai! wai! waylay! waylay! waylay! &c., which has a pretty plaintive sound, especially when, as is usually the case, a number of soft female voices join in.

"The 'ambilta' and the 'cundan' keep time with them, and add not a little to the effect. This continues until all the expected friends have arrived, and had their fill of wailing; and about noon the whole party retire to the house, where a cow is killed, and a quantity of provisions provided for those who have come from a distance. Everything, except the cow, is usually furnished by the neighbours, as the mourners are supposed to be so overwhelmed with grief as to be unable to attend to such preparations."

The "ambilta," which is mentioned above, is a musical instrument composed of a set of six pipes, each performer having one pipe, and each pipe only having one note. The "cundan melaklat" is made of four long cane tubes, each having a bell, and a reed mouth-piece, like that of a clarinet. They are played in succession like the ambilta, and give forth very harsh and unpleasant notes. Both instruments are generally accompanied by a small drum. Although the immediate ceremonies of the funeral terminate with this feast, they are not totally completed. Indeed, for a whole year, masses are said regularly for forty days, and another mass is said on the eightieth day. A second and larger edition of the funeral feast, called the "teskar," is held six months after the burial, and sometimes lasts for several days.

To this feast come all the poor, who claim for themselves the right of being helped before any of the regular guests. They seat themselves in the "dass," and pour out loud invocations, until an official comes round, and slightly taps each one on the head with a stick. The man who has been thus signalled holds out his hands, and receives in them a portion of meat rolled up in "teff" bread. When all have been served, they hold the food under their mouths, and call, in a very loud voice, "Hai . . . oh!" the last syllable being protracted until they have no more breath.

This "Hai . . . oh" is thought to be a sort of benediction, and very few would dare to omit it. Such an omission would be taken as a drawing down of the maledictions of the

poor, and would excite the greatest contempt. If such a man were to quarrel, his opponent would be sure to say to him, "Ah! you are the man who made no 'hai . . . oh' for his brother."

On the next day the priests and men of highest rank assemble, and day by day the rank of the guests diminishes, until the seventh day is contemptuously given to the women. Six months after the teskar another feast, but of a larger kind, is held, and on every anniversary of the funeral food is sent to the priests.

WE now naturally come to the religion of the Abyssinians.

This is a kind of Christianity which consists chiefly in fasting, so that an Abyssinian life oscillates between alternate severe fasts and inordinate gluttony. The fasts of the Abyssinian Church occupy nearly two-thirds of the year, and are measured in duration by the length of the shadow. One fast, for example, must be kept until a man's shadow measures in length nine and a half of his own feet, another until it is nine feet, and a third until it is ten feet long. And these fasts are real ones, no food of any kind being taken until the prescribed time, and no such modifications as fish, &c., being allowed to mitigate their severity. During Good Friday and the following Saturday the clergy, and all who have any pretensions to religion, fast for forty-eight hours; and altogether, including the Wednesdays and Fridays, two hundred and sixty days of fasting occur in the year.

During the long fasts, such as that of Lent, which lasts for fifty-five days, the people are allowed to eat on the mornings of Saturday and Sunday, but, even in that case, meat in any form is strictly forbidden.

As soon as the lengthening shadow proclaims the end of the fast, the feasting sets in, and during the season of Epiphany the whole night is passed in a succession of eating, drinking, singing, dancing, and praying, each being considered equally a religious duty. Then there is a sort of game, much resembling our "hockey," at which all the people play, those from one district contending against those of another, much as the Ashburne North and South football match used to be conducted on Shrove Tuesday.

St John's Day is a great feast among the Abyssinians, and has this pre-eminence over the others, that all the people not only wash themselves, but their clothes also. It is the only day when the Abyssinians apply water externally, with the exception of washing the hands before and after meals, and the feet after a journey. In fact, they consider that washing the body is a heathenish and altogether un-Christian practice, only to be practised by the Mohammedans and such like contemptible beings.

Between St John's Day and the feast of Mascal, or the Cross, the young people of both sexes keep up a continual skirmishing. In the evening they all leave their houses, the boys with bunches of nettles, and the girls with gourds filled with all kinds of filth. When they meet, they launch volleys of abuse at each other, the language being not the most delicate in the world, and then proceed to active measures, the girls flinging the contents of the gourds at the boys, while the latter retaliate by nettling the girls about their naked shoulders.

The day on which the greatest ceremonials take place is the feast of Mascal. On the eve of Mascal every one goes about with torches, first carrying them over the houses, and peering into every crevice like the Jews looking for leaven, and then sallying into the air. The play which ensues mostly turns into a fight, which reminded Mr. Parkyns of the town and gown rows at college, and which begin in the same way, *i.e.* with the mischievous little boys. These begin at first to abuse each other, and then to fight. Next, a man sees his son getting rather roughly handled, drags him out of the fray, and pommels his antagonist. The father of the latter comes to the rescue of his son, the friends of each party join in the struggle, and a general fight takes place. Mostly these contests are harmless, but, if the combatants have been indulging too freely in drink, they are apt to resort to their weapons, and to inflict fatal injuries.

During the night great fires of wood are built by the chiefs on the highest hills near the towns, and set on fire before daybreak. Oxen and sheep are then led three times round the fires, slaughtered, and left to be eaten by the birds and beasts of prey. This

is distinctly a heathen custom, both the position of the altar and the mode of sacrifice designating clearly the fire-worshipper. When, therefore, the people awake in the morning after the fatigue and dissipation of the night, they find the whole country illuminated with these hill-fires.

They then go to their several chiefs, and all the soldiers boast before him of their prowess, some describing the feats which they have done before the enemy, and others prophesying the feats that they intend to do when they happen to meet an enemy. Gifts are mostly presented at this time, and feasting goes on as usual; every chief, however petty, slaughtering as many cows as he can afford, and almost every householder killing at least one cow.

The churches of Abyssinia are not in the least like those edifices with which we generally associate the name of church, being small, low, flat-roofed, and, indeed, very much like the old Jewish tabernacle transformed into a permanent building. Some of the more modern churches are oblong or square, but the real ancient Abyssinian buildings are circular, and exactly resemble the ordinary houses, except that they are rather larger. They are divided into three compartments by concentric walls. The space between the first and second wall is that in which the laity stand, the priests alone having the privilege of entering the holy place within the second wall.

In the very centre is a small compartment, sometimes square and sometimes circular. This is the Most Holy Place, and contains the ark, which is venerated almost as much by the Abyssinians as the ancient ark was revered by the Jews. The ark is merely a wooden box, in many churches being of extreme antiquity, and within it is placed the Decalogue. Over the ark is a canopy of silk or chintz, and around it are a vast number of silken and cotton rags. They even fancy that the original ark of the Jews is deposited within a rock-shrine in Abyssinia.

The Abyssinians also follow the old Jewish custom of taking their sacred shrine into battle.

In the illustration on page 738, which represents a battle between the Abyssinians and Gallas, is seen the king, shaded with his umbrellas, giving orders to a mounted chief, whose ornamented shield and silver coronal denote his rank. In the distance may be seen villages on fire, while on the right an attack is being made on one of the lofty strongholds in which the people love to entrench themselves. Several dead Gallas are seen in the foreground, and in front of the king are some of the fallen prisoners begging for mercy.

In the right-hand corner of the illustration is seen a conical object on the back of a mule. This is one of their shrines, which accompanies them as the ark used to accompany the Israelites to battle. The shrine mostly contains either a Bible or the relics of some favourite saint, and the covering of the mule is always of scarlet cloth. Two priests, with their white robes and turbans, are seen guarding the mule.

Paintings of the rudest possible description decorate the walls of the church, and are looked upon with the greatest awe, though they are no better in execution than the handiwork of a child of six. Their subjects are generally the Crucifixion and conventional portraits of saints, St. George being, perhaps, the greatest favourite, and having the most numerous representations.

The priesthood are, as may be imagined, no very good examples either of piety or letters. Some of them, but by no means all, can read; and even of those who do possess this accomplishment, very few trouble themselves to understand what they read, but gabble the words in parrot fashion, without producing the least impression on the brain.

Such being the education of the teachers, that of the taught may be inferred; in fact, no Abyssinian layman can read. The late King Theodore was a brilliant exception to this general rule; but then it must be remembered that he had passed several years in a monastery, and had partaken of the same educational privileges as those who were intended for the priesthood. Consequently, the Bible is a sealed book to all the laity and to a very large proportion of the priests, and the lives of the saints, and the various written charms which they purchase so freely, are by the Abyssinians valued far above the sacred volume itself.

As moreover the scribes, who are the most educated men in the country, gain their living by writing copies of the Bible, of the lives of the saints, and by writing charms, it is their interest to keep the people in ignorance, even though the laity were to manifest any desire to think for themselves. As, however, thinking is far too troublesome a process for them, they very contentedly leave all their religious matters in the hands of their clergy. Each man to his own business, say they—the warriors to fight, the priests to pray.

As for these lives of the saints, they are a collection of the most marvellous tales, often ludicrous and puerile, mostly blasphemous according to our ideas on the subject, but sometimes highly poetic and even touching the sublime. There is one tale of St. Gabro Memfus Kouddos, i. e. Slave of the Holy Spirit, which contrives to comprise in



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itself all these elements. He was born a saint, stood up and repeated the threefold invocation three days after his birth, and was so very holy that for his entire life he took no nourishment of any kind.

Once he fell over a precipice three hundred feet deep, and when the angels spread their wings under him he declined their assistance, giving his reasons at such length that the fall must have been a very slow one. The apparently blasphemous portions of his life I omit, and proceed to the end of it.

He would go on living for such an unconscionable time that at last the angel of death was sent personally to fetch him. The saint, however, declined the invitation, and logically argued that, as he had neither eaten nor drunk, his body did not belong to earth, therefore could not be restored to earth, and that, on the whole, any change must be for

the worse. All the previous saints came and tried to persuade him, and at last he found himself obliged to die. But then there was a great controversy as to the destination of his body. Air, of course, would not take it; and as the saint had never eaten nor drunk nor used a fire, neither of the elements could receive his body; and so he was again restored to it, and, still living, was taken up to heaven. Any of our readers who have perused the *Talmud* will remember a similar legend, which is doubtless the origin of the above-mentioned story.

This being a sample, and a very mild one, of the religion of the Abyssinians, we may easily imagine what must be their superstitions.

These are of the genuine African cast, and have survived with undiminished strength in spite of the system of Christianity which has so long existed in Abyssinia.

The people fully believe in the power of transformation. There is a sort of demon, called Bouda, who possesses this power, and is supposed to be the special demon of blacksmiths. Now in Abyssinia the trade of blacksmith is hereditary, and is considered a disgraceful one, all smiths being looked upon as sorcerers. This idea has evidently taken its rise from times of great antiquity, when the power of smelting, forging, and welding iron was thought to be too wonderful to be possessed by ordinary human beings.

Mr. Parkyns narrates several instances of this belief in transformation. He knew, for example, of two little girls who had been in the forest to gather wood, and came back in a great fright. They had met a blacksmith, and had begun to jeer at him for a wizard, asking him as a proof of his power to turn himself into a hyæna. The man took them at their word, untied a corner of his robe, took out some ashes, and sprinkled them over his shoulders. Immediately his head changed into that of a hyæna, hair spread itself over his body, and, before they could recover from the terror which paralysed them, the now complete hyæna grinned and laughed at them, and then trotted into the neighbouring bush.

Another story curiously resembles some of the transformation tales of the Arabian Nights.

Two Bouda brothers used to make a good living by their powers of transformation. One of them would change himself into a horse, mule, or some other valuable animal, and was then sold by his brother. In the middle of the night the transformed man resumed his human shape, and walked home to join his brother. This went on for some time, but at last no one would buy from them, as they kept no stock. No one knew where they obtained the animals which they sold, and, moreover, no one liked to buy animals which had a knack of always escaping before twenty-four hours. At last one man determined to solve the mystery. One of the Bouda brothers offered for sale a peculiarly handsome horse. The man bought it, and as soon as he got the animal out of the town, he drove his lance through its heart, and killed it on the spot.

He then threw himself in the way of the seller, and uttered loud lamentations over his hasty temper, which had caused him to kill so splendid an animal. The Bouda contrived to hide his emotion until he reached his home, and then began the usual lamentations for the dead, rubbing the skin off his temples and wailing loudly. On being questioned, he said that he was mourning the death of his brother, who had been robbed and murdered by the Gallas, from whom he had been buying horses for sale.

It seems also that the Boudas can transform other persons into animals, even without their consent.

A woman had died, and, immediately after the funeral, a blacksmith came to the priest in charge of the cemetery, and bribed him to give up the newly-buried corpse. This was done, and the neighbours all remarked that the blacksmith had purchased a remarkably fine donkey, on which he always rode. There was this peculiarity about the animal, that it always wanted to run into the house where the dead woman had lived, and whenever it met any of the young people brayed loudly, and ran towards them.

The eldest son being a very intelligent young man, suddenly declared that the animal in question must be his mother, and insisted on bringing the ass and its rider into the hut. Here the animal seemed quite at home: and the smith was charged with being a Bouda, and with changing the body of the woman into an ass. At first he repudiated the

assertion, but at last, by dint of mingled threats and promises, he confessed that he had indeed wrought the change. The woman was not dead, but was only in a trance into which he had thrown her, and could be restored to her own form again. Being promised forgiveness, he began his incantations, when the ass gradually threw off the furry coat and assumed the human form. The transformation was nearly complete, when one of the sons, in a sudden access of fury, drove his spear through the blacksmith and stopped the transformation, so that ever afterwards the woman had one human foot and one ass's hoof. Many persons told Mr. Parkyns that they had actually seen the hoof in question.

The Bouda exhibits his power in various modes, one of which is a kind of possession, in which the afflicted person is, as it were, semi-demoniacal, and performs feats which are utterly impossible to the human body in the normal condition. Men and women are alike seized with the Bouda madness, although the females are naturally more liable to its attacks than the men, generally accounting for the fact by stating that they have rejected the love of some Bouda or other. The chief object of the Bouda seems to be to lay a spell on the afflicted persons which will cause them to come at his call. Consequently, he assumes the shape of the hyæna, calls the victims at night, and, if they are not bound and carefully watched, they are forced to go to the hyæna, and are then devoured.

A remarkable example of this Bouda illness was watched by Mr. Parkyns with the greatest care. The afflicted person was a servant woman of Rohabaita. The complaint began by languor and headache, and then changed into an ordinary fit of hysterics, together with great pain.

"It was at this stage that the other servants began to suspect that she was under the influence of the Bouda. In a short time she became quiet, and by degrees sank into a state of lethargy, approaching to insensibility. Either from excellent acting and great fortitude, or from real want of feeling, the various experiments which were made on her seemed to have no more effect than they would have had on a mesmeric somnambulist. We pinched her repeatedly; but, pinch as hard as we could, she never moved a muscle of her face, nor did she otherwise express the least sensation. I held a bottle of strong salvolatile under her nose, and stopped her mouth; and this having no effect, I steeped some rag in it, and placed it in her nostrils; but, although I would wager any amount that she had never either seen, smelt, or heard of such a preparation as liquid ammonia, it had no more effect on her than rosewater.

"She held her thumbs tightly inside her hands, as if to prevent their being seen. On my observing this to a bystander, he told me that the thumbs were the Bouda's particular perquisite, and that he would allow no person to take them. Consequently, several persons tried to open her hands and get at them; but she resisted with what appeared to me wonderful strength for a girl, and bit their fingers till in more than one instance she drew blood. I, among others, made the attempt, and, though I got a bite or two for my pains, yet either the devil had great respect for me as an Englishman and a good Christian, or she had for me as her master, for the biting was all a sham, and struck me as more like kissing than anything else, compared with the fearful wounds she had inflicted on the rest of the party.

"I had a string of ornamental amulets which I usually wore, having on it many charms for various maladies; but I was perfectly aware that none for the Bouda was among them. Still, hoping thereby to expose the cheat, I asserted that there was a very celebrated one, and laid the whole string on her face, expecting that she would pretend to feel the effects, and act accordingly; but, to my surprise and disappointment, she remained quite motionless. Several persons had been round the village to look for some talisman, but only one was found. On its being applied to her mouth she for an instant sprang up, hit at it, and tore it, but then laughed, and said it was weak, and would not vex him.

"I here use the masculine gender, because, although the patient was a woman, the Bouda is supposed to speak through her medium; and, of whatever sex they be, the sufferers, or rather the spirits, when speaking of themselves, invariably use that gender. I deluged her with bucketfuls of water, but could not either elicit from her a start or a pant, an effect usually produced by water suddenly dashed over a person.

"At night she could not sleep, but became more restless, and spoke several times. She even remarked in her natural tone of voice that she was not ill, nor attacked by the Bouda, but merely wished to return to Adoun. She said this so naturally that I was completely taken off my guard, and told her that of course she might go, but that she must wait till the morrow. The other people smiled, and whispered to me that it was only a device of the Bouda to get her out into the forest, and then devour her."

By one of those curious coincidences that sometimes occur, a hyæna, who, according to the popular ideas, was the transformed Bouda, was heard hooting and laughing close to the village for the whole of the night, that being the only time that Mr. Parkyns had known the animal do so during the whole of his stay at Rohabaita. In consequence of the presence of the animal, the young woman was tightly bound, and sentinels were placed within and without the door of the hut. Whenever the hyæna called, the woman moaned and started up, and once, after she had been quiet for nearly an hour, and the inner sentinel had dropped off to sleep, the hyæna came close to the hut, and the woman rose, *without her bonds*, crept on all-fours to the door, and had partly succeeded in opening it when one of the sentinels made a noise, and she went back to her place. In this way she was kept under the strictest watch for three days, during which time she would neither eat nor drink, rejecting even a small piece of bread when she had swallowed it, and on the third evening she mended and gradually recovered.

If this were imposture, as Mr. Parkyns remarks, it is difficult to find a motive. She had scarcely any work to do, and the wonder is what could make her voluntarily prefer three days' confinement, with pinches, cords, cold water, and other ill-treatment—not to mention that severest of all punishments to an Abyssinian, total abstinence from food and drink.

According to the people, this enchantment is caused by a Bouda, who has learned the baptismal name of the affected person. This is always concealed, and the Abyssinians are only known by a sort of nickname, which is given by the mother as they leave the church. When, however, a Bouda learns the baptismal name, he takes a straw, bends it into a circle, mutters charms over it, and puts it under a stone. As the straw is bent, the illness begins; and should it break, the victim dies.

Charms of certain kinds have a potent effect on the Bouda. On one occasion a poor weakly girl was lying apparently senseless, on whom Mr. Parkyns had uselessly tried, by the application of false charms, to produce an effect. Suddenly the woman flew into violent convulsions, screaming and struggling so that four strong men could scarcely hold her. Just then an Amhara soldier entered the outer court, and she cried out, "Let me alone, and I will speak." This man, it appeared, had heard that a patient was ill of the Bouda, and had brought with him a charm of known power.

After much threatening with the amulet, accompanied by fierce and frantic rage on the part of the possessed, the Bouda promised to come out if food were given him. It is remarkable, by the way, that the Bouda is always of the male sex, and, whether the possessed be a man or a woman, always uses the masculine gender in language. The rest must be told in Mr. Parkyns' own words:—

"A basin was fetched, in which was put a quantity of any filth that could be found (of fowls, dogs, &c.), and mixed up with a little water and some ashes. I took the basin myself, and hid it where I was positive that she could not see me place it, and covered it up with some loose stones which were heaped in the corner. The Bouda was then told that his supper was prepared, and the woman rose and walked down the court on all-fours, smelling like a dog on either side, until, passing into the yard where the basin was, she went straight up to it, and, pulling it out from the place where it was hidden, devoured its abominable contents with the utmost greediness. The Bouda was then supposed to leave her, and she fell to the ground, as if fainting. From this state she recovered her health in a few days."

A somewhat similar sort of possession is called Tigritya. In this case the patient falls into a sort of wasting away, without apparent cause, and at last sits for several days together without eating or speaking. Music is the only means of curing a patient, who will then spring from the couch on which he has lain, apparently without strength to sit up,

and will dance with the most violent contortions, keeping up the exercise with a vigour and pertinacity that would tire the strongest man in perfect health. This is a sign that the demon may be driven out; and when the music ceases, the patient falls to the ground, and then begins to speak (always in the person of the demon), demanding all kinds of ornaments—sometimes, even if a poor woman, asking for the velvet robes and silver-mounted weapons of a chief. These cannot be obtained without much expense, but at last are procured, when the dancing is resumed, and, after several accessions of the fit, the patient takes off all the borrowed ornaments, and runs at full speed until the demon suddenly departs, and the possessed person loses all the fictitious strength that had



INTERIOR OF HOUSE.

animated him, and falls to the earth in a swoon. The demon takes his leave, and is deterred from returning by the firing of guns, and a guard with drawn swords that surrounds the prostrate form of the moaning patient.

THE architecture of the Abyssinians is simple, but characteristic. Houses differ in form according to the means of their owner, those of the commonalty being merely circular huts, while those of the wealthy are square and flat-roofed.

A rich man's house is rather a complicated piece of architecture. It stands in an enclosure, like an Indian compound, and the principal gateway is covered and flanked on either side by a porter's lodge, in which sleep the actual gate-keeper and other servants. Within the enclosure are generally a few slight huts of straw, for the reception of strangers or servants. About one-fourth of the compound is divided by a wall, and contains the kitchen, store-houses, &c. At the end opposite the gateway is the *Adderash*, or reception-room, which is square or oblong, and often of considerable size. The roof is flat; but

when the room is too large to be crossed by beams, only the angles are roofed in the ordinary way, so as to leave an octagonal opening in the centre. A wooden wall about four or five feet high is next built round the opening, and there is then no difficulty in roofing it.

The Adderash is divided into three rooms, the largest of which is the reception-room. At the end is the stable, the horses and mules passing into it through the reception-room. The "medeb," or bed-room (if it may be so called), is merely a strip of the apartment, about eight feet wide, separated by a partition wall; and if the owner of the house should be a married man, the entrance of the medeb is closed by a curtain. This apartment takes its name from the medeb, or divan, which is simply a part of the floor raised a foot or so above the rest, about five feet in width, and extending for the whole length of the room. Opposite the medeb is a small alcove, in which is placed the couch of the master of the house. This couch, or "arat," is a stout wooden framework, across which is stretched a network of raw hide thongs, an inch or two in width. These contract when drying, and form a tolerably elastic bed.

In warm weather the arat is placed out of doors, and is only covered with a slight cloth roof. One of these outdoor beds may be seen in the illustration.

The floor of the reception-room is covered with grass, just as in the olden times even palace-floors were strewn with rushes. Whenever a visitor enters, fresh grass is strewn to make a clean seat for him, but no one thinks of removing that which already has become discoloured. Consequently, what with the continual washing of hands by pouring water over them, the spilling of beer and mead, and the mud that clings to the horses' feet as they pass to and from their stable, the flooring of the house becomes nothing more or less than a fermenting manure-heap. At last, when even the Abyssinian nose can endure it no longer, the room is cleared, and left empty for a day or two in order to rid it of the intolerable odour which still clings to it.

Round the walls of the reception-room are a number of cows' horns by way of pegs, on which are hung the spears, shields, horse-accoutrements, drinking-horns, and other property of the owner.

The store-houses contain huge earthenware jars, the mouths of which nearly reach the roof of the house, though their bases are sunk a yard or so in the ground. The Abyssinians value these jars highly, inasmuch as they are evidences of wealth.

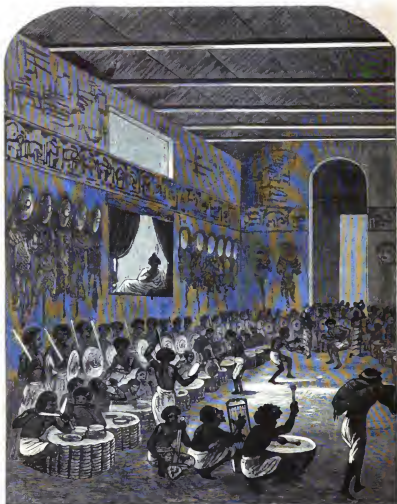
As to the other two provinces, Shoa and Amhara, there is so little difference between them and Tigré that there is no need to occupy space with them. Practically they form one kingdom, just as England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, and there is among them a very strong provincial jealousy, analogous to that which still prevails among the uneducated members of our own United Kingdom. Even Mr. Parkyns could not resist the feeling, and was a strenuous admirer of Tigré, considering the Amharas as ferocious and overbearing boors, and despising the Shoas altogether.

The province of Shoa, however, is by no means a despicable one, as may be seen from the following description of the great annual feast which is given by the king or prince at Easter. This hospitable banquet is on a truly royal scale, and is continued for a whole week, so that every free man who can attend the capital may have an opportunity of taking part in it.

The banqueting-room is a very large and lofty chamber, having on one side a curtained alcove, in which the prince sits. Fresh grass is daily strewn on the floor, and round the room are set the tables, which are low, circular pieces of wickerwork. It is only in such houses that the tables are uniform in shape or size. Behind the tables and ranged along the wall are the body guards of the prince, armed with shields and a sword much resembling the old Roman weapon.

Troops of servants are in waiting, and before the banquet begins they bring in the bread in piles, and place it on the tables. Sometimes as many as thirty loaves will be placed for each guest, the finest bread being always at the top and the coarsest below.

The object of this arrangement is to suit the different ranks of the party. Those of highest rank come first, and eat the finest, using the second-class bread as table-napkins.



EASTER BANQUET

When they have finished, the guests of the next rank come in, eat the second-class bread, and wipe their fingers on the third-class bread, and so on until the whole is consumed.

Round the room are hung rows of shields, lion skins, and mantles of honour to be conferred by the prince on his subjects, while above them is a wide carpet, on which are depicted lions, camels, horses, and other animals.

All being ready, the guests assemble, and the prince takes his seat in the alcove, where he gives audience. Professional musicians enliven the scene with their instruments, and professional dancers aid their efforts. In the meantime, the guests are eating as fast as they can, the servants carrying meat from one guest to the other, and making up neat little sausages of meat, bread, and pepper, which they put adroitly into the mouths of the guests. As in more civilized lands, it is always better to propitiate the servants, because they can give the best parts of the meat to those whom they like, and reserve the gristle and toughest parts for those who displease them.

The politer guests, having by means of two or three pounds of meat, a pile of bread, and a gallon or so of mead, taken the edge off their own appetites, make up similarly seasoned balls, and put them into their neighbours' mouths. This is done with such rapidity that a man who happens to have made himself agreeable to his right and left hand neighbours is nearly choked by the haste with which etiquette requires that he shall despatch the highly-spiced morsels.

After this preliminary portion of the feast, in which cooked mutton is mostly employed, acting as a provocative to the real banquet which is to follow, the servants bring in raw meat still warm with life, and cut from a cow that has been slaughtered at the door while the mutton and bread has been consumed.

It is this part of the scene which has been chosen for the illustration. On the left is the giver of the feast sitting in his alcove, and below him are the armed guards. The guests are sitting at the wickerwork tables, using their curved swords with the national adroitness, and servants are seen waiting on the guests and carrying great pieces of raw beef about. The liquids, by the way, are drunk from horns, which are always served by women. In the centre are seen the musicians, playing the curious fiddle and harp of Shoa, and a little further on are the dancers.

As to the other tribes which are either in or about Abyssinia, a very few words must suffice for them.

There is one curious and very wild tribe, known by the name of BAREA. They are inborn marauders, executing their raids with marvellous rapidity and skill. So clever are they at concealing themselves, that even on a open plain, where there is not the least cover, they manage to dispose of themselves in such a way as to deceive an eye unpractised in their arts.

Once Mr. Parkyns was passing through a district over which one of the bush fires had swept, when he was astonished by the exclamation of his guide, that Barea were in sight, pointing at the same time to a dead tree, standing on an eminence at a distance of several hundred yards, and charred black by last year's fires. "All I saw was a charred stump of a tree, and a few blackened logs or stones lying at its foot. The hunter declared that neither the tree nor the stones were there the last time that he passed, and that they were simply naked Barea, who had placed themselves in that position to observe us, having no doubt seen us for some time, and prepared themselves.

"I could scarcely believe it possible that they should remain so motionless, and determined to explore a little. The rest of the party advised me to continue quietly in the road, as it was possible that, from our presenting a rather formidable appearance, we should pass unmolested; but so confident was I of his mistake, that, telling the rest to go on slowly as if nothing had happened, I dropped into the long grass and stalked towards them. A shot from my rifle, at a long distance (I did not venture too close), acted on the tree and stones as promptly as the fiddle of Orpheus, but with the contrary effect, for the tree disappeared, and the stones and logs, instead of running after me, ran in the opposite direction.

"I was never more surprised in my life, for so complete was the deception, that even up to the time I fired I could have declared the objects before me were vegetable or mineral—anything but animal. The fact was that the cunning rascals who represented stones were lying flat, with their little round shields placed before them as screens."

Some of the wild tribes of India act in the same manner. There is a well-known story of an officer on the march, who was so completely deceived that he stood close by one of

these metamorphosed men for some time, and at last hung his helmet on a projecting bough. This was nothing more than a leg of the dark savage, who was standing on his head, with his limbs fantastically disposed to represent the branches of an old tree-stump, the illusion being heightened by the spear-shafts, which did duty for the smaller branches. This mark of confidence was too much for the gravity of the savage, who hurst into a shriek of laughter, turned head-over-heels, and disappeared into the jungle, the helmet still attached to his leg.

These clever and withal amusing mauraders are very thorns in the side of the Abyssinians, who never know when the Barea may not be upon them. In many respects they resemble the warlike tribes of the Red Indians, though they are certainly superior to them in size and strength. They will follow a travelling party for days, giving not an indication of their presence, and speaking to one another wholly by signs, of which they have an extensive vocabulary. But they will never show themselves until the time comes for striking the long-meditated blow, when they will make their attack, and then vanish as mysteriously as they had come. On one occasion nearly two hundred Barea came over night to the outskirts of a village, and there lay in wait. In the early morning, two of the principal men of the village, one a man who was celebrated for his majestic and somewhat pompous demeanour, took a walk towards their cotton-fields, and found themselves in the midst of the Barea, who captured them, and carried them off to be sold as slaves to the Arabs, who would probably sell them again to the Turks.

When the Barea encamp round a village, they keep themselves warm for the night by the ingenious plan of each man digging a hole in the ground, making a small fire in it, and squatting over it enveloped in his cloth, so as to retain the heat and to prevent the fire from being seen.

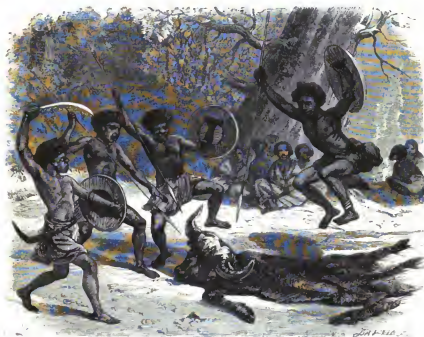
SURROUNDING a very considerable portion of Abyssinia proper are various tribes of the fierce and warlike GALLAS.

The Galla men are a fine and even handsome race, extremely variable in the hue of their skin, as may be supposed from the very large extent of ground which is inhabited by their tribes. Moreover, they have mixed considerably with the Abyssinians proper, and are often employed as slaves by them. Female Galla slaves are frequently kept in the households of Abyssinians, and the consequence is, that a mixed progeny has sprung up which partakes of the characteristics of both parents. This has taken place considerably in Shoa, where the Galla element is very conspicuous among the population. As a rule, however, they are much darker than the Abyssinians, a circumstance which has induced Mr. Johnstone to derive their name from the word "calla," or black. Their language is a dialect of the Amhara tongue, but varied, like their skins, according to the precise locality of the tribe.

The features of the Gallas have none of the negro characteristics, such as the length of the skull, the contracted (though not receding) forehead, and the full development of the lips and jaws. The hair resembles that of the Abyssinians, and is dressed in various modes. Sometimes it is formed into long, narrow plaits, hanging nearly to the shoulders, and in others it is frizzed out into tufts. The most singular way of dressing the hair is to collect it into three divisions, one occupying the top of the head, and one crossing each temple. The divided tresses being then combed and frizzed to the greatest possible extent, the whole head has a most comical aspect, and has been likened to the ace of clubs.

The young women are bold and handsome, but are anything but good-looking when they grow old. Three old women who visited Mr. Johnstone, and evidently acted as spies, were remarkable for their ugliness. They wore the hair in the usual multitudinous plaits, which they had connected by means of threads, so as to form them into a continuous curtain, and had been exceedingly lavish of hutter. They wore a sort of soft leather petticoat, and had on their feet a simple sandal of ox-hide, fastened to the foot by a lap passing over the great toe, and a thong over the instep. They came ostensibly to sell tobacco and ropes. The latter articles they made even while they were hargaining, a bundle of hemp being fastened to their girdles in front, and the ropes, as fast as they were twisted, being coiled round their waists.

The Gallas are a warlike race, and far more courageous than the Abyssinians, who are more given to vapouring than fighting. When they return home after a victory they celebrate a curious and violent dance, called the Buffalo Dance. A head and the attached skin of a buffalo is laid on the ground, and the men assemble round it armed as if for war, with their spears and crooked swords. They then dance vigorously round the buffalo skin, leaping high in the air, striking with their swords, and thrusting with their spears, and going through all the manœuvres of killing the animal. The women take an active part in the dance.



BUFFALO DANCE

THEN there are the Dankalli and Somauli tribes, each of them subdivided into a number of smaller tribes, and having some traits peculiar to themselves, and others common to the Abyssinians proper. Indeed, Mr. Johnstone remarks that he has no doubt that, although they are now distinct nations, they are derived from a common origin.

The Somaulis are a warlike people, and, instead of the spears and shields which are almost the universal weapons through this part of Africa, they carry light bows and large quivers, which hang under the left arm by a broad strap passed over the same shoulder. The bow, though light, is very strong, and is much after the classical or Cupid's bow form. In consequence of this shape, when the arrow is discharged, the string comes quickly against the handle, and if the archer be inexpert his thumb gets a violent blow.

The quiver is made of an emptied gourd, the mouth of which is closed with a cover like that which is represented on several of the African quivers mentioned in this work. It contains about a dozen arrows, about a foot in length, and made of a hollow reed.

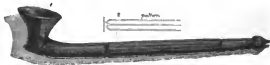
Each is armed with a head of blue steel, shaped something like the ace of spades, and having its neck lengthened into a spike about an inch and a half long; this is not attached to the arrow, but is loose, and when wanted for use the spike is simply slipped into the unfeathered end of the hollow shaft. Of course, when the weapon strikes its object, the shaft falls off, and the head, which is poisoned, remains in the wound, and soon causes death.

Instead of the sword, they carry a knife with a blade about eight inches in length, the handle being merely a piece of wood rounded, and slightly hollowed to give a firmer grasp.

The dress of the men consists of a "fotah," or waist cloth, and a robe called the "sarree." Differing in use, these cloths are of exactly the same shape and size, *i.e.* about eleven feet in length. The fotah is wound twice round the waist, the end being tucked in behind, and the whole garment made secure by the broad belt which holds the knife. The sarree is worn in robe-fashion, round the body, and a man of taste disposes it so as to show off the two broad stripes of blue or scarlet at the end.

The women also wear the fotah, over which, when out of doors, they wear a long blue skirt without sleeves, and very open down the front. This is laid aside in the house, where nothing but the fotah is worn. The mode of dressing the hair into a continuous veil has been already mentioned, and Mr. Johnstone was fortunate enough to witness the process of dressing "this entangled mass, which reminded me of the hair of Samson, interwoven with the web of the loom. The lady whose hair was to be operated upon sat upon a stone in the court beneath one of our windows, and behind her, on her knees, was a stout slave-girl, who held in both hands a long-handled wooden fork-like comb, having four very strong prongs, which she dragged through the woolly, greasy, and black hair of her mistress, with the force of a groom currying a horse's tail."

The particular sub-tribe to which the people belong is denoted by sundry incised marks, which are cut with a fragment of obsidian, and are formed into patterns which sometimes extend over the whole back and breast.



CLAY PIPE, NUBIA (From my collection.)

CHAPTER LXVII.

NUBIANS AND HAMRAN ARABS.

TINT OF THE NUBIAN SKIN—DRESS AND WEAPONS OF THE MEN—PECULIAR SWORD AND SHIELD—
DRESS OF THE WOMEN—THE RĀHAT, OR THONG APRON—AMULETS—NUBIAN ARCHITECTURE—
THE HAMRAN ARABS—WEAPONS OF THE MEN—CARE TAKEN OF THE WEAPONS—ELEPHANT
HUNTING—ADMIRABLE HORSEMANSHIP—CATCHING BABOONS—HUNTING THE LION—CATCHING A
BUFFALO BY THE TAIL—HARPOONING THE HIPPOPOTAMUS.

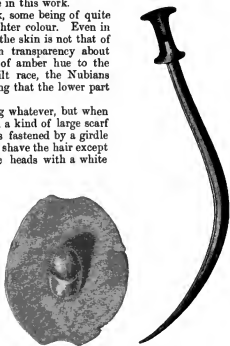
INASMUCH as, in spite of the continual contact with civilization, caused by their locality on the Nile bank, the Nubians have preserved their ancient style of dress and much of their ancient manners, they deserve a place in this work.

In colour the Nubians are mostly black, some being of quite a jetty hue, while others are of much lighter colour. Even in the blackest Nubian, however, the tint of the skin is not that of the tropical negro, but there is a certain transparency about it, which, in the sunbeams, gives a sort of amber hue to the limbs. Besides being a fine and well-built race, the Nubians possess pleasing features, the only fault being that the lower part of the face is somewhat apt to project.

While young the boys wear no clothing whatever, but when adult they wear short trousers, a shirt, and a kind of large scarf which passes over the left shoulder, and is fastened by a girdle round the waist. Being Mahometans, they shave the hair except one tuft on the crown, and cover their bare heads with a white cotton cap.

The Nubian men mostly go armed according to their ability. The usual weapons are the sword, dagger, spear, and shield. The sword is shaped somewhat like that of the Abyssinian, but the curve is not so abrupt. The general style of the weapon, however, and the shape of the handle, proclaim a common origin. With some of the Nubians the favourite weapon is the straight sword, like that of the Hamran Arabs, which will be described in a future page.

Perhaps on account of the facility which the Nile affords for travelling into South Central Africa, they wear a dagger



SHIELD AND SWORD

fastened to the left arm just above the elbow, exactly as do several of the tribes that are found near the sources of the Nile. This dagger is short and crooked, and is kept in a red leathern sheath, and, on account of its position on the arm, is covered by the garments. The spear is simply the ordinary wooden shaft with an iron head, and has nothing about it specially worthy of notice.

The shield, however, is remarkable for its structure. It is generally made of the hide of the hippopotamus or of crocodile skin, and is easily known by the projecting boss in the centre. The hide is stretched on a wooden framework, and the boss is made of a separate piece of skin. The Nubians value these shields very highly, and, in consequence, it is extremely difficult to procure them. The shield and sword which are given in the illustration are drawn from specimens in Colonel Lane Fox's collection. The notches which are seen in the edge are not accidental, but are made according to the fashion of the time.

The women are dressed after the usual African manner.

As girls they wear nothing but a little apron of leathern thongs called a *râhat*. This apron is about nine inches or a foot in width, and perhaps six or seven in depth, and in general appearance resembles that of the Kaffir girl. Instead of being cut from one piece of leather, each thong is a separate strip of hide, scarcely thicker than packthread, and knotted by the middle to the thong which passes round the waist. The apron is dyed of a brick-red colour, and, after it has been in use for any time, becomes so saturated with the castor-oil which stands these primitive belles in lieu of clothing, that the smell is unendurable. Travellers often purchase them from the Nubian girls, who, as a rule, are perfectly willing to sell them; but the buyers are obliged to hang their purchases on the top of the mast for a month or so before they can be taken into the cabin. One of these aprons in my collection has still the familiar castor-oil odour about it, though many years have passed since it was purchased from a Nubian girl.

Of course they wear as many ornaments as they can procure; and some of these, which are handed down from one generation to another, are of great value. Few characteristics are more striking to an observant traveller than the fact that a Nubian girl whose whole dress may perhaps be worth threepence, and who really could not afford to wear any clothing at all if it cost sixpence, will yet carry on her neck, her wrists, her ankles, and in her ears, a quantity of gold sufficient to purchase a handsome equipment.

It is rather a remarkable point that these aprons always become narrower towards the left side. The daughters of wealthy parents, though they wear no clothing except the apron, still contrive to satisfy the instinctive love of dress by covering the leathern thongs with beads, white shells, and pieces of silver twisted round them. When the girls marry, they retain the apron, but wear over it a loose garment, which passes over one shoulder, and hangs as low as the knee.

The ornaments with which they profusely decorate their persons are of various materials, according to the wealth of the woman who owns them. Those of the wealthy are of gold and silver, while those of the poorer class are of buffalo horn, brass, and similar materials. The metal amulets are of a crescent shape, and are open at one side, so as to be clasped on the arm or removed, according to the wearer's pleasure.

The hair is dressed in a way that recalls the ancient Egyptian woman to the traveller. It is jetty black, and tolerably long, and is twisted with hundreds of small and straight tresses, generally finished off at the tips with little knobs of yellow clay, which look at a distance as if they were lumps of gold. Amulets of different kinds are woven into the locks, and the whole is so saturated with castor-oil that an experienced traveller who wishes to talk to a Nubian woman takes care to secure the windward side, and not to approach nearer than is absolutely needful. As a rule, the Nubian women are not so dark as the men, but approach nearly to a coffee tint.

"Two beautiful young Nubian women visited me in my boat, with hair in the little plaits finished off with lumps of yellow clay, burnished like golden tags, soft deep bronze skins, and lips and eyes fit for Iris and Athor. Their very dress and ornaments were the same as those represented in the tombs, and I felt inclined to ask them how many thousand years old they were." (Lady Duff Gordon's "Letters from Egypt.")

The same writer well remarks that the whole country is a palimpsest, in which the Bible is written over Herodotus, and the Koran over the Bible. In the towns the Koran is most visible; in the country, Herodotus.

One of these graceful Nubian girls is represented in the frontispiece to this volume.

The amulets which have been just mentioned are worn by men and women alike, and are sewn up in red leather cases like those of the Bornuans. It is an essential part of their efficacy that their contents should not be known, and if once a case be opened, the enclosed amulet loses its power. The men often wear great numbers of them, tying them on their arms above the elbows.

The houses in which the Nubians live, or rather in which they sleep, are of very simple construction. Residing among the ruins of palaces, the Nubians have never learned to build anything better than a mud hut. These huts are of much the same shape as the old Egyptian buildings, being squared towers, large at the base, and decreasing towards the top, which is square, and in the better class of house answers as a terrace. The roof is covered with palm-branches, and every good house possesses a sort of courtyard surrounded by walls, in which the women can pursue their different vocations while sheltered from the sun.

Granaries are seen near every village, and consist of shallow pits sunk in the ground and covered with a sort of white plaster. The villages also possess a shed for the reception of strangers, and each house has a jar of fresh water always kept ready for use.

Fortunately for themselves, the Nubians are both proud and fond of their country; and, although they are despised by the Arabs to such an extent that a Nubian always tries to pass himself off as an Arab whenever he has the opportunity, they are ever boasting of the many perfections of the land which they thus reject.

How long the Nubians may possess this land is doubtful. The Turk, "under whose foot no grass grows," is doing his best to depopulate the country. The men are pressed for soldiers, as many as thirty per cent. having been carried off in one conscription, and they are always being seized for forced labour—i.e. a life somewhat worse than that of plantation slaves. Consequently, as soon as they take alarm, they leave their village and escape into the interior, abandoning their crops and allowing them to perish rather than serve under the hated rule of the Turk. The least resistance, or show of resistance, is punished by death, and several travellers have related incidents of cold-blooded cruelty which seem almost too horrible to tell, but which were taken quite as matters of ordinary occurrence. Taxation, too, is carried out to a simply ruinous extent, and the natural result is fast taking place, namely, the depopulation of the land, and the gradual lessening of the number of tax-payers.

THE HAMRAN ARABS.

To describe, however briefly, all the tribes which inhabit the vast district called Arabia, would be a task far beyond the pretensions of this work. Some have advanced very far in civilization, while others have retained, with certain modifications, their pristine and almost savage mode of life. I shall therefore select these latter tribes as examples of the Arab life, and shall briefly describe one or two of the most characteristic examples.

SOUTH of Cassala there is a remarkable tribe of Arabs known as the Hamrans, who are celebrated through all the country for their skill in hunting.

They possess the well-cut features and other characteristics of the Arab race, and are only to be distinguished by the style of wearing the hair. They permit the hair to grow

to a great length, part it down the middle, and carefully train it into long curls. Each man always carries the only two weapons he cares about, namely, the sword and shield. The latter is of no very great size, is circular in shape, and about two feet in diameter, with a boss in the centre much like that of the Nuhian shield already described. It is made of the skin of the hippopotamus, and, being meant for use and not for show, is never ornamented.

As to the sword, it is the chief friend of the Hamran Arab's life, and he looks upon it with a sort of chivalric respect. It is straight, double-edged, and is furnished with a cross-handle, like that of the ancient Crusaders, from whom the fashion seems to have been borrowed. The blades are of European make, and the Arabs are excellent judges of steel, valuing a good blade above everything. They keep both edges literally as sharp as razors, and prove the fact by shaving with them. When a Hamran Arab is travelling and comes to a halt, the first thing he does after seating himself is to draw his sword and examine both edges with the keenest attention. He then sharpens the weapon upon his leathern shield, and when he can shave the hair on his own arm with both edges, he carefully returns the blade into the sheath.

The length of the blade is three feet, and the handle is about six inches long, so that the weapon is a very weighty one, and a fair blow from its keen edge will cut a man in two. Still, it is not serviceable in single combat, as, although its weight renders a successful blow fatal, it prevents the recovery of the sword after an unsuccessful blow. Sir S. Baker, to whom we are indebted for an account of this remarkable tribe, says that a Hamran Arab, with his sword and shield, would be at the mercy of an ordinary swordsman. He can cut and slash with wonderful energy, but knows nothing of using the point or parrying, so that, if a feint be made at his head, he will instinctively raise the shield, and lay his whole body open to the point of his adversary's sword.

The scabbard in which the sword is carried is very ingeniously made of two strips of soft and elastic wood, slightly hollowed to receive the blade, and covered with leather. The absurd metal scabbards still in use in our army would be scorned by an Arab, who knows the value of a keen edge to his weapon. On the scabbard are fitted two projecting pieces of leather. When the Arab is on the march, he slings the sword on the pommel of his saddle, and passes his leg between these leather projections, so that the sword is held in its place, and does not jump and bang against the sides of the horse.

Armed with merely the sword, these mighty hunters attack all kinds of game, and match themselves with equal coolness against the elephant, the rhinoceros, the giraffe, the lion, or the antelope. Their mode of procedure is almost invariably the same. They single out some particular animal, and contrive to cut the tendon of the hind leg with a blow of the sword, thus rendering the unfortunate beast helpless.

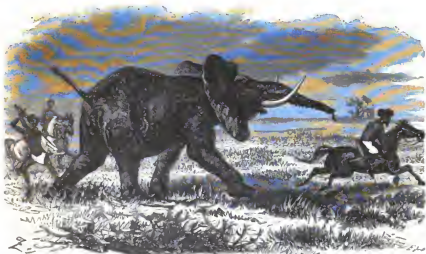
When they chase the elephant, they proceed in the following manner. The elephant hunters, or aggageers, as they call themselves, convert their swords into two-handed weapons by wrapping thin cord very closely round the blade, for about nine inches from the handle. The guarded portion of the blade is held in the right hand, and the hilt in the left.

Two hunters generally set out in chase of the elephant. Having selected the bull with the largest tusks, they separate it from its fellows, and irritate it until it charges them. One of the aggageers takes on himself this duty, and draws the attention of the elephant upon himself. The irritated animal makes its furious onset, and goes off at full speed after the aggageer, who carefully accommodates his pace to that of the elephant, so that it always thinks it is going to catch him, and forgets that he has a companion.

Meanwhile, the other aggageer rides close to the side of the elephant, draws his sword, springs to the ground, bounds alongside of the elephant, delivers one tremendous cut on the ankle of the hind foot, and springs again on his horse. As soon as the elephant puts the injured foot on the ground, the joint becomes dislocated, and the foot turns up like an old shoe. The animal is now helpless, and, while its attention is still engaged by the aggageer whom it has been pursuing, the swordsman passes to its other side, slashes the ankle of the remaining leg, and brings the animal to a dead halt. The sword is carefully wiped, sharpened, and returned to the sheath, while the wounded elephant sinks to the

ground, and in a short time dies from loss of blood. Thus one man will kill an elephant with two blows of a sword.

It is evident that such hunting as this requires the most perfect horsemanship, and it is accordingly found that the Hamran Arabs are among the best horsemen in the world. They and their steeds seem to be actuated by one spirit, and they sit as if the horse and his rider were but one animal. In his travels in Abyssinia Sir S. Baker gives a very graphic account of their mode of riding.



AGGAGEERS HUNTING THE ELEPHANT.

"Hardly were we mounted and fairly started, than the monkey-like agility of our aggageers was displayed in a variety of antics, that were far more suited to performance in a circus than to a party of steady and experienced hunters, who wished to reserve the strength of their horses for a trying journey.

"Abou Do was mounted on a beautiful Abyssinian horse, a grey; Suleiman rode a rough and inferior-looking beast; while little Jali, who was the pet of the party, rode a grey mare, not exceeding fourteen hands in height, which matched her rider exactly in fire, spirit, and speed. Never was there a more perfect picture of a wild Arab horseman than Jali on his mare. Hardly was he in the saddle, than away flew the mare over the loose shingles that formed the dry bed of the river, scattering the rounded pebbles in the air from her flinty hoofs, while her rider in the vigour of delight threw himself almost under her belly while at full speed, and picked up stones from the ground, which he flung, and again caught as they descended.

"Never were there more complete Centaurs than these Hamran Arabs; the horse and man appeared to be one animal, and that of the most elastic nature, that could twist and turn with the suppleness of a snake; the fact of their separate being was proved by the rider springing to the earth with his drawn sword while the horse was in full gallop over rough and difficult ground, and, clutching the mane, he again vaulted into the saddle with the agility of a monkey, without once checking the speed.

"The fact of being on horseback had suddenly altered the character of these Arabs; from a sedate and proud bearing they had become the wildest examples of the most savage disciples of Nimrod; excited by enthusiasm, they shook their naked blades aloft till the steel trembled in their grasp, and away they dashed, over rocks, through thorny

bush, across ravines, up and down steep inclinations, engaging in a mimic hunt, and going through the various acts supposed to occur in the attack of a furious elephant."

This capability of snatching up articles from the ground stands the hunters in good stead. If, for example, they should come across a flock of sheep, each man will dash through the flock, stoop from his saddle, pick up a lamb, and ride off with it. They can even catch far more active prey than the lamb or kid. On one occasion, as the party were travelling along, they came upon a large troop of baboons, who had been gathering gum arabic from the mimosas. "Would the lady like to have a baboon?" asked Jali, the smallest and most excitable of the party.

Three of the hunters dashed off in pursuit of the baboons, and in spite of the rough ground soon got among them. Stooping from their saddles, two of the aggageers snatched each a young baboon from its mother, placed it on the neck of the horse, and rode off with it. Strange to say, the captive did not attempt to escape, nor even to bite, but clung convulsively to the mane of the horse, screaming with fear. As soon as they halted, the hunters stripped some mimosa bark from the trees, bound the baboons, and with their heavy whips inflicted a severe flogging on the poor beasts. This was to make them humble, and prevent them from biting. However, in the course of the next halt, when the baboons were tied to trees, one of them contrived to strangle itself in its struggles to escape, and the other bit through its bonds and made off unseen.

For such work as this, the hunter must be able to stop his horse in a moment, and accordingly the bit must be a very severe one. The saddle is a very clumsy affair, made of wood and unstuffed, while the stirrups are only large enough to admit the great toe.

The rhinoceros gives far more trouble to the hunters than the elephant. It is much swifter, more active, and can turn more rapidly, spinning round as if on a pivot, and baffling their attempts to get at its hind leg. Unlike the elephant, it can charge on three legs, so that a single wound does not disable it. Still the Hamran Arabs always kill the rhinoceros when they can, as its skin will produce hide for seven shields, each piece being worth two dollars, and the horn is sold to the Abyssinians as material for sword-hilts, the best horn fetching two dollars per pound.

Lion-hunting is not a favourite pursuit with the Hamrans, as they gain little if successful, and they seldom come out of the contest without having suffered severely. They always try to slash the animal across the loins, as a blow in that spot disables it instantly, and prevents it from leaping. Sometimes the lion springs on the crupper of the horse, and then a back-handed blow is delivered with the two-edged sword, mostly with fatal effect.

The buffalo, fierce and active as it is, they hunt with the sword. Nothing, perhaps, shows the splendid horsemanship and daring courage of the Hamrans better than a scene which was witnessed by Sir S. Baker.

A large herd of buffaloes was seen and instantly charged by the aggageers, and, while the buffaloes and hunters were mixed together in one mass, the irrepressible little Jali suddenly leaned forward, and seized the tail of a fine young buffalo, some twelve hands high. Two other hunters leaped from their horses, snatched off their belts, and actually succeeded in taking the animal alive. This was a great prize, as it would be sold for a considerable sum at Cassala. Now as Jali was barely five feet three inches in height, and very slightly made, such a feat as seizing and finally capturing a powerful animal like a buffalo bull was really a wonderful one.

They are as active on foot as on horseback. On one occasion, three of them, Jali of course being one, were so excited with the chase of a wounded elephant that they actually leaped from their horses and pursued the animal on foot. The elephant was mad with rage, but seemed instinctively to know that his enemies wanted to get behind him, and always turned in time to prevent them. Active as monkeys, the aggageers managed to save themselves from the charges of the elephant, in spite of deep sand, which impeded them, while it had no effect on the elephant. Time after time he was within a yard or so of one of the hunters, when the other two saved him by dashing upon either flank, and so diverting his attention.

They hunt the hippopotamus as successfully as they chase the elephant, and are as mighty hunters in the water as upon land.

In this chase they exchange the sword and shield for the harpoon and lance. The former weapon is made on exactly the same principle as that which has already been described when treating of the hippopotamus hunters of South Central Africa, but it is much lighter. The shaft is a stout bamboo about ten feet in length, and the head is a piece of soft steel about a foot long, sharply pointed at one end and having a single stout



HUNTING THE HIPPOPOTAMUS.

barb. One end of a rope, about twenty feet in length, is firmly attached to the head, and to the other end is fastened a float made of a very light wood called ambatch, which is also used for making canoes and rafts.

When the hunter sees a hippopotamus, and means to attack it, he puts on his hunting dress, *i.e.* he braces a leathern belt round his waist, and takes off all his clothes. He then fixes the iron head on the bamboo shaft, winds the rope round the latter, and boldly enters the water, holding the harpoon in the right hand and the ambatch float in the left. As soon as he comes within striking distance of his victim, the harpoon is hurled, and the hunter tries to find a spot in which the infuriated animal cannot reach him. The

wounded hippopotamus dashes about, first in the river, then on the bank, and then in the river again, always trailing after it the rope and float, and so weakening itself, and allowing its enemies to track it. Sooner or later they contrive to seize the end, drag the animal near the bank, and then with their lances put it to death.

Often, when they have brought the hippopotamus to the shore, it charges open-mouthed at its tormentors. Some of them receive it with spears, while others, though unarmed, boldly await its onset, and fling handfuls of sand into its eyes. The sand really seems to cause more pain and annoyance than the spears, and the animal never can withstand it, but retreats to the water to wash the sand out of its eyes. In the meantime, weapon after weapon is plunged into its body, until at last loss of blood begins to tell upon it, and by degrees it yields up its life.

Sir S. Baker gives a most animated description of one of these strange hunts.

One of the old Hamran hunters, named Abou Do—an abbreviated version of a very long string of names—was celebrated as a howarti, or hippopotamus hunter. This fine old man, some seventy years of age, was one of the finest conceivable specimens of humanity. In spite of his great age, his tall form, six feet two in height, was as straight as in early youth, his grey locks hung in thick curls over his shoulders, and his bronze features were those of an ancient statue. Despising all encumbrances of dress, he stepped from rock to rock as lightly as a goat, and, dripping with water, and bearing his spear in his hand, he looked a very Neptune.

The hunters came upon a herd of hippopotami in a pool, but found that they were too much awake to be safely attacked.

"About half a mile below this spot, as we clambered over the intervening rocks through a gorge which formed a powerful rapid, I observed, in a small pool just below the rapid, an immense head of a hippopotamus close to a perpendicular rock that formed a wall to the river, about six feet above the surface. I pointed out the hippo to old Abou Do, who had not seen it.

"At once the gravity of the old Arab disappeared, and the energy of the hunter was exhibited as he motioned us to remain, while he ran nimbly behind the thick screen of bushes for about a hundred and fifty yards below the spot where the hippo was unconsciously basking, with his ugly head above the surface. Plunging into the rapid torrent, the veteran hunter was carried some distance down the stream, but breasting the powerful current, he landed upon the rocks on the opposite side, and retiring to some distance from the river, he quickly advanced towards the spot beneath which the hippopotamus was lying. I had a fine view of the scene, as I was lying concealed exactly opposite the hippo, who had disappeared beneath the water.

"Abou Do now stealthily approached the ledge of rock beneath which he had expected to see the head of the animal; his long sinewy arm was raised, with the harpoon ready to strike as he carefully advanced. At length he reached the edge of the perpendicular rock; the hippo had vanished, but, far from exhibiting surprise, the old Arab remained standing on the sharp ledge, unchanged in attitude.

"No figure of bronze could have been more rigid than that of the old river-king, as he stood erect upon the rock with the left foot advanced, and the harpoon poised in his ready right hand above his head, while in the left he held the loose coils of rope attached to the ambatch buoy. For about three minutes he stood like a statue, gazing intently into the clear and deep water beneath his feet.

"I watched eagerly for the reappearance of the hippo; the surface of the water was still barren, when suddenly the right arm of the statue descended like lightning, and the harpoon shot perpendicularly into the pool with the speed of an arrow. What river-fiend answered to the summons? In an instant an enormous pair of open jaws appeared, followed by the ungainly head and form of the furious hippopotamus, who, springing half out of the water, lashed the river into foam, and, disdaining the concealment of the deep pool, he charged straight up the violent rapids. With extraordinary power he breasted the descending stream; gaining a footing in the rapids, about five feet deep, he ploughed his way against the broken waves, sending them in showers of spray upon all sides, and upon gaining broader shallows he tore along through the water, with the buoyant float

hopping behind him along the surface, until he landed from the river, started at full gallop along the dry shingly bed, and at length disappeared in the thorny nabbuk jungle."

During one of these flights, the hippopotamus took it into his head that the ambatch float was the enemy that was damaging him, and attacked it furiously. Taking advantage of his pre-occupation, two hunters swam across the river, carrying with them a very long and tough rope, and holding one end on each bank, and "sweeping," as the sailors say, they soon caught the float in the centre of the rope and brought it ashore. The hippopotamus then made a charge, and the slackened line was immediately coiled round a rock, while two hunters fixed additional harpoons in the animal; and though he made six charges at his foes, bit one of the ropes asunder, and crushed the lance-shafts between his teeth like straws, the hardy hunters got the better of him, and his death was a mere matter of time.

The hippopotamus is nearly as great a prize as the rhinoceros, as it affords an almost unlimited supply of food, and the hide is extremely valuable, being cut into strips two inches in width, which are used in the manufacture of the koorbash, or hide whip, so universally employed throughout Africa.

In the water, the crocodile is even a more dangerous antagonist than the hippopotamus, and yet the Hamrans attack it with their harpoons, boldly entering the water, and caring no more for crocodiles than for so many frogs.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

BEDOUINS, HASSANIYEHs, AND MALAGASY.

SIGNIFICATION OF THE NAME—GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE BEDOUINS—THEIR ROBBER NATURE—HOSPITALITY AND ITS DUTIES—LIFE AMONG THE BEDOUINS—THE BEDOUIN WOMEN—SIMPLE MODE OF GOVERNMENT—CONSTANT FEUDS—MODE OF COOKING—THE DATE AND ITS USES—THE HASSANIYEHs—GENERAL APPEARANCE—THEIR VILLAGES—STRANGE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS—A HASSANIYEH DANCE—SUPERSTITIONS OF THE ARABS—THE HAUNTED HOUSE—NOTIONS OF THE MIRAGE—THE INK MIRROR—THE MALAGASY AND THEIR TRIBES—THE FIRST DEEP-EATER—THE HOVA TRIBE—ARCHITECTURE—THE TRAVELLER'S TREE AND ITS USES—TREATMENT OF SLAVES—NOTIONS OF RELIGION—THE BLACKSMITH TRIBE.

Of all the many tribes which are designated by the common title of Arab, the typical tribes are those which are so well known by the name of BEDOUIN, or BEDAWEEH. The former is the more familiar mode of spelling the word, and it will therefore be employed.

The name is a most appropriate one, being derived from an Arabic word which signifies the desert, and meaning, therefore, a man of the wilderness. The Bedouins are indeed men of the desert. True Ishmaelites, their hand is against every man, and every man's hand against them. They build no houses, they cultivate no lands, they conduct no merchandise; but are nomad and predatory, trusting chiefly for their living to the milk of their camels, and looking upon their horses and dromedaries as means whereby they can plunder with greater security.

As Mr. Palgrave pithily remarks, while treating of the character of the Bedouin: "The Bedouin does not fight for his home, he has none; nor for his country, that is anywhere; nor for his honour, he has never heard of it; nor for his religion, he owns and cares for none. His only object in war is the temporary occupation of some bit of miserable pasture-land, or the use of a brackish well; perhaps the desire to get such a one's horse or camel into his own possession."

In person the Bedouins are fine specimens of the human race. They are tall, stately, with well-cut features, and have feet and hands that are proverbial for their beauty. Their demeanour in public is grave and haughty, and every man walks as if he were monarch of the world. While other Arab tribes have lost their distinctive manners by contact with civilization, the Bedouins alone have preserved them, and, even when they visit the cities which they hate so much, they can be at once distinguished by their demeanour. Lady Duff-Gordon was greatly struck with it. "To see a Bedawee and his wife walk through the streets of Cairo is superb. Her hand resting on his shoulder, and scarcely deigning to cover her haughty face, she looks down on the Egyptian veiled woman, who carries the heavy burden and walks behind her lord and master."

The dress of the Bedouins is simple enough. The men wear a sort of a tunic or shirt, covered with a large thick mantle called the haik. Another cloth is disposed over the head, and falls on either side of the face so as to shield it from the sun, and is kept in its place by a cord of camel's hair, that is wound several times across the brows. As

for the women, they wear a blue shirt, much open at the bosom, and care for no other clothing.

Being a predatory race, the Bedouins are always armed, their chief weapon being the spear, which is of enormous length, and often so weighty that a powerful as well as a practised arm is required to wield it. At the present day those who can afford fire-arms carry guns of such length of barrel that they seem to have been made in emulation of the spear-shafts. These weapons are of very indifferent quality, and the Bedouin is never a good marksman, his clumsy weapon taking a long time to load, and the owner taking a long time to aim, and then aiming very badly.

In consequence of the robber nature of the Bedouins, no one will venture to pass through their districts without being well armed, or protected by a sufficient escort. At the present day, Europeans can travel with comparative safety, as they have a way of fighting when attacked, and of generally hitting their mark when they fire, so that even the wandering Bedouins have conceived a respect for such incomprehensible beings, and would rather receive them as guests than fight them as enemies.

If, however, they come upon a solitary traveller, they pounce upon him, and rob him of everything, even of his clothes. Still, they are not brutal about it, except perhaps in enforcing haste by a menacing gesture with a spear. They seldom accompany robbery with murder, and have been known to take the traveller whom they have robbed into their tents, feed him, give him old clothes instead of the new which they have taken from him, keep him all night, and send him on his journey, even taking the trouble to accompany him for some distance, lest he should lose his way. The robber feels no enmity towards the man, and simply looks on him as a providential benefit cast in his way, and as such rather respects him than otherwise.

The reader will remember that the Bedouin takes the man to his tent *after* he has robbed him. Had he begun operations by allowing the traveller to enter his tent, and partake of his food, he could not have robbed his guest afterwards. There is a chivalrous sort of feeling in the Arab mind that the person of a guest is sacred; and if the fiercest Bedouin had received a man under the shadow of his tent, he would be bound to protect that man as if he were his own son. So far is this feeling carried, that instances have been known where a strange Arab has taken refuge in a tent and received protection, though the owner discovered that his guest had killed one of his nearest relations.

The only habitations of the Bedouins are their tents. These tents, on which so much poetry has been lavished, are about as unpoetical as anything can be. Any one can make a Bedouin tent in five minutes. He has only to take a few sticks, some five feet in length, thrust one end into the ground, throw over them a piece of black and very dirty sackcloth, peg the edges to the ground, and there is the tent. Being only some four feet in height in the middle, no one can stand upright in it, and only in the middle can any one even sit upright. But as the tent is not regarded as we regard a house, and is only used as a sort of convenient shelter in which the Arabs can sleep, height is of no importance.

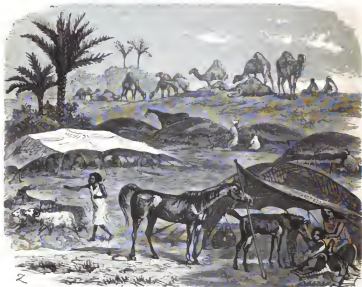
These low, dark tents are almost invariably pitched in the form of a semicircle, the openings eastward, and just enough space left between each hut for the passage of their camels and horses. The area inclosed between the arms of the crescent is intended for the children, as a place wherein they may disport themselves while still under the mother's eye. When new, the tents are mostly striped in broad bands of two or three feet in width, but the rough usage to which they are subjected soon destroys the colour.

Such are the tents of the ordinary Bedouins. The sheikh, or chief of each clan, has a larger and better tent, which is divided into compartments by curtains, so disposed as to leave a set of rooms on the outside, and one or more rooms in the centre. Those on the outside are for the men, and those in the interior for the women belonging to the sheikh's family. A certain amount of privacy is gained, which belongs, however, only to the eye and not to the ear, the partitions being nothing more than curtains, and the Arabs all speaking in the loudest of voices—a bawling nation, as a French traveller described them.

The furniture is suitable to the dwelling, and consists merely of a mat or two and a

few pots. Some of the wealthier are very proud of possessing brass mortars in which they pound their coffee, and every morning is heard the musical tinkle of the coffee-maker. Even the men condescend to make coffee, and the sheikh himself may be seen at work in the morning, pounding away at the berries, and rejoicing equally in the musical sound of the pestle and the fragrant odour of the freshly-roasted coffee.

Thus bred entirely in the open air, the only shelter being the tattered sackcloth of the tent, the true Bedouin can endure no other life. He is as miserable within the walls of a town as a wolf in a trap. His eyes, accustomed to range over the vast expanse of desert, are affronted by the walls over which he cannot see. The streets oppress him, and within the atmosphere of a room he can scarcely breathe. Both he and his camel are equally



BEDOUIN CAMP.

out of their element when among civilized people, and they are ever looking forward to the happy moment when they may again breathe the free air of the desert.

Life among the Bedouins is not pleasant to a European, and is by no means the sort of paradisaical existence that we are often led to think. It is certainly a free life in its way, and has that peculiar charm which is felt by all civilized beings when first allowed to do as they like. But it has its drawbacks, not the least being that every one is equally free; and if a stronger man should choose to assert his freedom by plundering the traveller, he is at perfect liberty to do so.

Then, the "Arab maids," who look so picturesque—in a painting—are not quite so pleasant in reality. Dirt, evil odours, screaming voices, and detestable manners are not seen in a picture, but in reality force themselves on more senses than one.

Even in youth the Bedouin girls are not so handsome as is generally thought. They are tall, well made, and graceful, but are deficient in that gentleness and softness which

we naturally associate with the feminine nature. They are fond of tattooing themselves, and cover their arms and chins with blue patterns, such as stars or arabesque figures. Some of them extend the tattoo over the breast nearly as low as the waist. The corners of the eyes are sometimes decorated with this cheap and indestructible ornament. They are fond of ornaments, especially of ear-rings, which can scarcely be too large for them.

Unlike the more civilized Mahometans, they care little about veiling their faces, and, in fact, pass a life nearly as free as that of the men. Even the women's apartment of the tent is thrown open by day for the sake of air, and any one can see freely into it.

Feminine beauty differs as much among the Arabs as among other people. Mr. Palgrave says wittily that if any one could invent an instrument which could measure beauty—a kalometer, as he calls it—the Bedouin would be "represented by zero, or at most 1°." A degree higher would represent the female sex of Nejed; above them rank the women of Shomer, who are in their turn surmounted by those of Djowf. The fifth or sixth degree symbolizes the fair ones of Hasa; the seventh those of Katar; and lastly, by a sudden rise of ten degrees at least, the seventeenth or eighteenth would denote the pre-eminent beauties of Oman.

"Arab poets occasionally languish after the charmers of Hejaz; I never saw any one to charm *me*, but then I only skirted the province. All bear witness to the absence of female loveliness in Yamen; and I should much doubt whether the mulatto races and dusky complexions of Hadramout have much to vaunt of. But in Hasa a decided improvement in this important point is agreeably evident to the traveller arriving from Nejed, and he will be yet further delighted on finding his Calypsos much more conversible, and having much more too in their conversation, than those he left behind him in Sedeys and Aared."

It is popularly thought that Arab manners are like those of the Turk,—grave, polite, and majestic. The fact is far different. Though like the American Indian, the Arab has a proud and stately walk, and knows well enough how to assume a regally indifferent demeanour on occasion, he is by nature lively and talkative, not caring very much what he talks about; and fond of singing Arab songs in that curious mixture of high screaming falsetto and guttural intonation which he is pleased to consider vocal music.

Then the general manners are by no means dignified, even when the Bedouins want to do special honour to a guest. Mr. Palgrave spent much time among them, and has drawn a vivid picture of life in a Bedouin encampment. It is no unfavourable one, the inmates being described as "ajaweed," or gentlemen—though the author remarks rather wickedly that, if they were gentlemen, he very much wondered what the blackguards were like.

"The chief, his family (women excepted), his intimate followers, and some twenty others, young and old, boys and men, came up, and, after a kindly salutation Bedouin-wise, seated themselves in a semicircle before us. Every man held a short crooked stick for camel-driving in his hand, to gesticulate with in speaking, or to play with in the intervals of conversation; while the younger members of society, less prompt in discourse, politely employed their leisure in staring at us, or in pinching up dried pellets of dirt from the sand, and tossing them about.

"But how am I to describe their conversation, their questions and answers, their manners and jests? 'A sensible person in this city is like a man tied up among a drove of mules in a stable,' I once heard from a respectable stranger in the Syrian town of Homs, a locality proverbial for the utter stupidity of its denizens. But among Bedouins in the desert, where the advantages of the stable are wanting, the guest rather resembles a man in the middle of a field among untied mules, frisking and kicking their heels in all directions around him.

"Here you may see human nature at its lowest stage, or very nearly. One sprawls stretched out on the sand, another draws unmeaning lines with the end of his stick, a third grins, a fourth asks purposeless or impertinent questions, or cuts jokes meant for wit, but in fact only coarse in the extreme. Meanwhile the boys thrust themselves forward without restraint, and interrupt their elders (their betters I can hardly say) without the smallest respect or deference.

"And yet, in all this, there is no real intention of rudeness, no desire to annoy—quite the reverse. They sincerely wish to make themselves agreeable to the new comers, to put them at their ease, nay, to do them what good service they can, only they do not exactly know how to set about it. If they violate all laws of decorum or courtesy, it is out of sheer ignorance, not *malice prepense*. And, amid the aimlessness of an utterly uncultivated mind, they occasionally show indications of considerable tact and shrewdness; while, through all the fickleness proper to man accustomed to no moral or physical restraint, there appears the groundwork of a manly and generous character, such as a Persian, for instance, seldom offers.

"Their defects are inherent in their condition, their redeeming qualities are their own—they have them by inheritance from one of the noblest races of earth, from the Arabs of inhabited lands and organized governments. Indeed, after having travelled much and made pretty intimate acquaintance with many races, African, Asiatic, and European, I should hardly be inclined to give the preference to any over the genuine unmixed clans of Central and Eastern Africa. Now these last-mentioned populations are identical in blood and tongue with the myriads of the desert, yet how immeasurably inferior! The difference between a barbarous Highlander and an English gentleman, in 'Rob Roy' or 'Waverley,' is hardly less striking."

The resemblance between the gipsy and the Bedouin is almost too evident to need mention, and the author of this passage has here drawn attention to the singular resemblance between the Bedouin and the Highlander, as described by Scott. There is, however, in the "Legend of Montrose," a passage which is worthy of being quoted in this place, so strangely close is the parallel. It occurs in the scene where the wounded Mac-Eogh is dying in prison, and is giving his last commands to his grandson. "Keep thou unsoiled the freedom which I leave thee as a birthright. Barter it not, neither for the rich garment, nor for the stone ring, nor for the covered board, nor for the couch of down. Son of the Mist, be free as thy forefathers. Own no land—receive no law—take no hire—give no stipend—build no hut—inclose no pasture—sow no grain. . . . Begone—shake the dust from thy feet against the habitations of men, whether banded together for peace or war." Shift the scene from Scotland to Arabia, and no more appropriate words could have been put into the mouth of a dying Bedouin chief.

With characters so impatient of control, it is evident that there can be no government worthy of the name. Like the Son of the Mist, they acknowledge no lord, and there is no one who bears even by courtesy the title of King of the Bedouins. Each clan is governed by its own sheikh, and occasionally a few clans unite for some raid under the presidency of the eldest or most important sheikh, and remain united for some time. But his rule only lasts as long as the others choose to obey him, and instead of being a sovereign, or even a commander-in-chief, he is but *primus inter pares*.

The clans themselves vary exceedingly in numbers, and, as a general rule, each clan consists of one family, gathered together after the patriarchal system. Then if one of the men should happen to excel his fellows he is sure to get together a band of followers, to separate in time from his family, and found a clan of his own.

In consequence of this insubordinate nature, war, as we understand it, is impossible, simply because discipline cannot be maintained. If, for example, several clans unite under the presidency of one of their number, should one of the confederated sheikhs feel dissatisfied with the commander, he will go off together with his people, and probably join another who is more to his mind.

Though war is unknown, the Bedouins live in a chronic state of feud, no one knowing whether his encampment may not be assailed by another clan, all his little property—dress included—torn from him, if he submits, and his throat very probably cut, if he resists. No one ever thinks of giving notice of attack, or of fighting anything like equal numbers. Should they not be far superior in numbers, they contrive to project their assault secretly, and to take their victims by surprise, and the man who is most ingenious in planning such raids, and the most active and courageous in carrying them out, is sure to be the man who will rise to a sort of eminence in his own clan, and finish by founding one of his own. The only object of such a raid is the acquisition of property; and even

a handsome horse, or a remarkably swift dromedary, will cause the destruction of a whole clan.

Living in the desert, and only travelling from one fertile spot to another, they cannot be expected to be very delicate in regard to provisions, nor to possess any great skill in cookery. Their greatest luxury is a feast on boiled mutton, and the whole process of cooking and serving is almost ludicrously simple. The body of the sheep is cut up and thrown into a pot, together with a sufficiency of water. The pot is then placed on the fire, and in process of time it boils. When it is about two-thirds cooked, according to



BEDOUIN COOKING HIS DINNER.

our ideas, the hungry Bedouins can wait no longer; it is all turned into a large wooden bowl, and the guests assemble round it. Their hands are plunged into the bowl, the scalding and half-raw meat is quickly torn to pieces, and in five minutes nothing is left but the cleanly picked bones. No vegetables are added to it, and no condiments are thought needful. Water is then passed round in another bowl or pail, a deep draught is taken, and the feast is over.

The bread of the Bedouin is as simple as the cookery. The baker pours a few handfuls of flour upon a circular piece of leather, pours a little water upon it, and kneads

it into dough. Another man has in the meantime been preparing a fire, and as soon as it burns up, the dough is patted into a thin circular cake, about one inch thick and six inches in diameter. This is laid on the fire and covered with embers, and after being turned once or twice, and the ashes brushed off it, it is taken from the fire, broken up, and eaten as it is—"half-kneaded, half-raw, half-roasted, and burnt all round." Were it not eaten while still hot, it would become so tough and leathery that not even a Bedouin could eat it. In fact, it very much resembles the rough-and-ready bread of the Australian shepherds, which is so well known under the name of "damper."

One advantage of this style of bread is, that it can be readily cooked on a journey, and, on special occasions, a camel-rider can even bake his bread while on the back of his dromedary.

The date is, however, the chief resource of the Bedouin, and on that fruit alone he can exist for a long time, even through the many hardships which he has to endure in his journeying through the desert. In England we do not know what the date really is, nor can understand the rich lusciousness of the fruit before it is dried and preserved. In the latter state it is very heating to a European, and slightly so even to a native, whereas in its fresh state it has no such evil qualities. It contains a marvellous amount of nourishment, and when fresh does not cloy the palate, as is always the case when it is dried.

In consequence of this nourishing property of the fruit, the date-tree is not only valued, but absolutely honoured. The Arah addresses it as his mother, and treats it with as much reverence as if it were really his parent. A single date-tree is a valuable property among all Arah tribes, and, although the genuine Bedouins own none, they reverence it as much as their more stationary brethren. Cutting down the date-trees of an enemy is looked upon as the last extremity of cruelty, while planting the trees on a new piece of ground is a sign of peace and prosperity.

The date is eaten in various ways. It is usually preferred while fresh and full of its own sweet juices, but, as it cannot be kept fresh very long, it is dried, pressed together, and so stored for future use. When the dried date forms a portion of a feast, the fruit is served in a large wooden bowl, in the middle of which is a cup containing melted butter. Each guest then picks out the dates singly from the mass, and dips each slightly into the butter before eating it.

There are many qualities of dates, and the best, which grow at Kaseem, are in great estimation, and are largely imported to the non-producing parts of Arabia. At Kaseem, the date-palm is cultivated to a great extent, and probably owes its peculiar excellence to the constant presence of water six or seven feet below the surface of the ground. The ripening season corresponds with our autumn, extending through the latter part of August and the beginning of September.

Some connoisseurs, however, prefer the Khalas date. It grows only in Hasa, and fully deserves its name, which signifies quintessence. It is smaller than the Kaseem date, semi-transparent, and of a rich amber colour. The sale of this particular date brings in a large income to Hasa, the fruit being exported as far as Bombay and Zanzibar.

Of religion, the genuine Bedouin has not the least idea. He is nominally a Mahometan, and will repeat certain formulae with perfect accuracy. He will say his Bismillahs, and Mashallahs, and other pious ejaculations as well as any one, but he has not the least idea who Allah may be, neither does he care. As far as Mr. Pulgrave could ascertain, their only idea of Allah was that of a very great sheikh, who would have about the same authority over them in the next world as their own sheikh in this sphere. That is to say, they consider that they will be quite as independent after death as before, and that they will acknowledge allegiance to this great sheikh as long as they choose, and no longer.

Like all men who are ignorant of religion, they are superstitious in proportion to their ignorance. Profoundly illiterate themselves, they have the greatest reverence for book-learning, and any one who can read a book is respected, while he who can write as well as read is regarded with a curious mixture of admiration, envy, and fear. The latter feeling is excited by his presumed ability of writing saphies, or charms, which are mostly sentences from the Koran, and are supposed to possess every imaginable virtue.

Before leaving the Bedouin Arabs, a few words must be said about the Arab and his horse. Many tales are told of the love that exists between the animal and its master, of the attention which is lavished on a favourite mare, and how she and her colt inhabit the tent together with the children, and are all playfellows together. This certainly may be the case occasionally, but not invariably.

That they are brought up in close contact is true enough, and that the animal thereby acquires an intelligence which it never could possess under less sociable treatment. But the Arab has no more real affection for his steed than has many an English gentleman for his favourite horse; and if he be angered, he is capable of treating the animal with hasty cruelty.

THE HASSANIYEH.

WE are come to a branch of the Arabs called the Hassaniyeh, who inhabit a large tract of land south of Khartoum. They are paler in complexion than those of whom we have already treated, having a decided tinge of yellow in their skins. They are slight, tall, and straight-featured. The men part their hair in the middle, plait it into long braids, and fasten it at the back of the head, so that they have rather a feminine aspect.

The villages of the Hassaniyeh are mere assemblages of slight huts, circular in shape, and having conical roofs, with a hole in the centre by way of a chimney. The walls are made of sticks and reeds, and the roofs of straw, and at a little distance the huts look more like tents than houses. Each hut is surrounded with a fence of thorns.

As among other Arab tribes, the sheikh's house is much larger and better than those of the commonalty, and is divided into several chambers. Sometimes a sort of second hut is placed in the interior, is made of fine yellow grass, and is inhabited by the women. Now and then a sheikh has his tent covered with camel's-hair cloth, and one of them, seen by Mr. Bayard Taylor, was thirty feet in length, and contained two inner chambers. The walls were covered with skins, gourds, and similar articles; the principal chamber contained a large bedstead or angarep; and the cloth roof was decorated with great quantities of cowrie shells, sewn upon it in crosses, stars, and other patterns.

The people have some very strange customs, among which is one that is almost peculiar to themselves, though an analogous custom prevails in one or two parts of the world. A woman when she marries doth not merge her identity entirely in that of her husband, but reserves to herself one-fourth of her life. Consequently, on every fourth day she is released from her marriage vows; and if she happens to take a fancy to any man, the favoured lover may live with her for four-and-twenty hours, during which time the husband may not enter the hut. With this curious exception, the Hassaniyeh women are not so immoral as those of many parts of the world. When a traveller passes through the country, they are bound to fulfil the rites of hospitality by assigning him a house during the time of his visit, and lending him a wife for the same period. Mr. Taylor suggests that if the Hassaniyeh would also lend him a family of children their generosity would be complete.

When a stranger of rank visits their domains, they perform a curious dance of welcome by way of salutation. Mr. Bayard Taylor has well described one of these dances which he witnessed on his voyage to Khartoum. He had won the hearts of the people by prescuing them with a handful of tobacco and fourpence in copper. "In a short time I received word that the women of the village would come to perform a dance of welcome and salutation, if I would allow them. As the wind was blowing strongly against us and the sailors had not finished skinning the sheep, I had my carpet spread on the sand in the shade of a group of mimosas, and awaited their arrival.

"Presently we heard a sound of shrill singing and the clapping of hands in measured beat, and discerned the procession advancing slowly through the trees. They came two by two, nearly thirty in all, singing a shrill, piercing chorus, which sounded more like lamentation than greeting.

"When they had arrived in front of me, they ranged themselves into a semicircle, with their faces towards me, and, still clapping their hands to mark the rhythm of the song, she who stood in the centre stepped forth, with her breast heaved almost to a level with her face, which was thrown back, and advanced with a slow undulating motion, till she had reached the edge of my carpet. Then, with a quick jerk, she reversed the curve



DANCE OF HASSANIYEH ARABS.

of her body, throwing her head forward and downward, so that the multitude of her long twists of black hair, shining with butter, brushed my cap. This was intended as a salutation and sign of welcome; I bowed my head at the same time, and she went back to her place in the ranks.

"After a pause the chorus was resumed and another advanced, and so in succession, till all had saluted me, a ceremony which occupied an hour. They were nearly all young, between the ages of fourteen and twenty, and some were strikingly beautiful. They had the dark-olive Arab complexion, with regular features, teeth of pearly whiteness, and black, brilliant eyes. The coarse cotton robe thrown over one shoulder left free the arms, neck, and breasts, which were exquisitely moulded. Their bare feet and ankles were as slender as those of the Venus of Cleomenes."

All the women took their part successively in this curious dance, and by far the most beautiful and graceful of them was the wife of the sheikh, a young woman barely twenty

years old, with features compared by Mr. Taylor to those of Guido's Cleopatra, the broad round forehead, full oval face, and regal bearing all adding to the resemblance. Her hair was plaited into at least fifty braids, and was thickly plastered with butter, and upon her head was a diadem of white beads. She moved with a stately grace down the line, and so charmed were the guests with her mode of performing the curious salutation, that she repeated it several times for their gratification.

Even the men took part in the dance, and one of them, a splendid example of the purest Arab blood, possessed so perfect a form, and moved in the dance with such entire and absolute grace, that he even drew away the travellers' attention from the women.

WE now come to some of the manners and customs of the Arabs, which are not restricted to certain tribes, but are characteristic of the Arab nature. Some of them are remarkable for the fact that they have survived through many centuries, and have resisted the influence of a comparatively new religion, and the encroachments of a gradually advancing civilization.

As may be expected, their superstitions have undergone but little change, and the learned and most civilized Arab acknowledges their power in his heart as well as the ignorant and half-savage Arab who never saw a book or entered a house. He will not openly admit that he believes in these superstitions, but he does believe in them very firmly, and betrays his belief in a thousand ways. Educated man though he be, he has a lingering faith in the efficacy of written charms; and if he should happen to see in the possession of another man a scrap of paper covered with characters he does not understand, he will feel uneasy as often as the mysterious writing occurs to him. Should he get such a piece of paper into his own possession, he cherishes it fondly, and takes care to conceal it from others.

In consequence of this widely-diffused superstition, travellers have passed safely through large tracts of country, meeting with various tribes of Arabs, all at variance with each other, in true Arab fashion, and yet have managed to propitiate them by the simple process of writing a sentence or two of any language on a scrap of paper. One favourite form of the "saphiès," as these written charms are called, exhibits a curious mixture of medicine and literature. A man who is ill, or who wants a charm to prevent him from being ill, brings to the saphiè-writer a smooth board, a pen and ink. The saphiè is written on the board, and the happy possessor takes it home, washes off every vestige of the writing, and then drinks the blackened water.

Even at the present day, the whole of the Arabian tribes have the full and implicit belief in the Jinns, Efreet, Ghouls, and other superhuman beings, that forms the chief element in the "Arabian Nights." This belief is inbred with them, and no amount of education can drive it out of them. They do not parade this belief, nor try to conceal it, but accept the existence of these beings as an acknowledged fact which no one would dream of disputing.

According to their ideas, every well has its peculiar spirit, mostly an efreet or semi-evil genius, and every old tower is peopled with them, and there is scarcely a house that has not at least one spirit inmate. Many of the Arabs say that they have seen and conversed with the efreet, and relate very curious adventures.

Generally, the efreet is harmless enough, if he be only let alone, but sometimes he becomes so troublesome that strong measures must be used. What was done in the way of exorcism before the discovery of fire-arms is not known, but in the present day, when an efreet can be seen, he can be destroyed by a bullet as if he were a human being.

Mr. Lane relates a most curious story of such an encounter. It is so interesting, and is so well told, that nothing but our very limited space prevents its insertion. The gist of it, however, is as follows:—

A European lady had been looking after a house in Cairo, and at last had found a very handsome one, with a large garden, for a very low rent—scarcely more than £12 per annum. She took the house, which pleased her well enough, though it did not have the same effect on the maid-servants, all of whom left it as soon as possible. At last the reason came out. The house was haunted by an efreet, which lived mostly in the bath, and

at night used to go about the house, banging at the doors, knocking against the walls, and making such a perpetual riot that he had frightened tenant after tenant out of it, and kept the house to himself. The family had heard the noises, but attributed them to the festivities which had been going on for some time at the next house.

In spite of the change of servants, the noises continued, and rather increased than decreased in violence. "Very frequently the door of the room in which we were sitting, late in the evening within two or three hours of midnight, was violently knocked at many short intervals. At other times it seemed as if something very heavy fell upon the pavement, close under the windows of the same room or one adjoining; and as these rooms were on the top of the house, we imagined at first that some stones or other things had been thrown by a neighbour, but we could find nothing outside after the noise I have mentioned. The usual sounds continued during the greater part of the night, and were generally varied with a heavy tramping, like the walking of a person in large clogs, varied by knocking at the doors of many of the apartments, and at the large water-jars, which are placed in recesses in the galleries."

During the fast of Ramadhan the house was free from noises, as efreets are supposed to be imprisoned during that season, but as soon as it was over they recommenced with added violence.

After a while, the efreet began to make himself visible, and a new door-keeper was greatly amazed by hearing and seeing the figure walking nightly round the gallery. He begged to be allowed to fire at it, and at last he was permitted to do so, provided that he only used blank cartridge. The man, however, not only put balls into his pistol, but loaded it with two bullets and a double charge of powder.

Just about midnight the report of the pistol rang through the house, followed by the voice of the door-keeper, crying out, "There he lies, the accursed!" and accompanied by sounds as of a wounded creature struggling and gasping for breath.

The man continued to call to his fellow-servants to come up, and the master of the house ran at once to the spot. The door-keeper said that the efreet had appeared in his usual shape, a tall white figure, and on being asked to leave the house, refused to do so. He then passed as usual down the passage, when the man fired at him and struck him down. "Here," said he, "are the remains." So saying, he picked up, under the spot where the bullets had entered the wall, a small mass of something that looked like scorched leather, perforated by fire in several places, and burnt to a cinder. This, it appears, is always the relic which is left when an efreet is destroyed. Ever afterwards the house was free from disturbance.

The reader will notice the curious resemblance to the efreet stories in the "Arabian Nights," more especially to the story of the Second Calender, in which the efreet and the princess who fought him were both reduced to ashes. The idea, too, of the wells being inhabited by efreets repeatedly occurs in those wonderful tales.

Another curious tale of the efreet was told to Mr. Taylor by an Arab of some rank. He was walking one night near Cairo, when he saw a donkey near him. The animal seemed to be without an owner, and, as he happened to be rather tired, he mounted, and rode on his way pleasantly. In a short time, however, he became startled by finding that the donkey was larger than it was when he mounted it, and no sooner had he made this discovery than the animal increased rapidly in size, and in a few minutes was as large as a camel.

Of course he was horribly frightened, but he remembered that a disguised efreet could be detected by wounding him with a sharp instrument. Accordingly, he cautiously drew his dagger, and was about to plunge it into the animal's back. The efreet, however, was too clever for him, and as soon as he saw the dagger, suddenly shrunk to his former size, kicked off his rider, and vanished with a peal of laughter and the exclamation, "Oh, you want to ride, do you?"

According to the Arab belief, the spirit of man is bound to pass a certain time on earth, and a natural death is the token of reaching that time. Should he be killed by violence, his spirit haunts the spot where his body was buried, and remains there until the term on earth has been fulfilled. The same Arab told Mr. Taylor that for many

years, whenever he passed by night over the place where Napoleon defeated the Mamelukes, the noise of battle was heard, the shouts of the soldiers, the cries of the wounded, and the groans of the dying. At first the sounds were loud, as of a multitude; but year by year they gradually decreased, as the time of earthly sojourn expired, and at the time when he told the story but few could be heard.

Among some of the tribes they have a rather odd superstition. A traveller was struck with the tastefulness of a young girl's head-dress, and wanted to buy it. She was willing enough to sell it for the liberal price which was offered, but her father prohibited the sale, on the ground that from the head-dress could be made a charm which would force the girl to fly to the possessor, no matter in what part of the world he might be.

It is not wonderful that, saturated as they are with these ideas, many of the wonders of nature appear to them to be of supernatural origin. Chief among them is that extraordinary phenomenon, the mirage, in which a place far below the horizon is suddenly made visible, and appears to be close at hand. Even in our own country we have had examples of the mirage, though not in so striking a manner as is often seen among the sandy plains of Arabia. Water is a favourite subject of the mirage, and the traveller, as he passes over the burning plains, sees before him a rolling river or a vast lake, the palm-trees waving on its edge and reflected on its surface, and the little wavelets rippling along as driven by the wind. Beasts as well as men see it, and it is hardly possible to restrain the thirsty camels from rushing to the seeming water.

The Arabs call the mirage, "Water of the Jinns," and believe that it is an illusion caused by the jinns—our old friends the geni of "The Arabian Nights." A very vivid account of this phenomenon is given in St. John's "Egypt and Nubia":—

"I had been riding along in a reverie, when, chancing to raise my head, I thought I perceived, desertwards, a dark strip on the far horizon. What could it be? My companion, who had very keen sight, was riding in advance of me, and, with a sudden exclamation, he pulled up his dromedary and gazed in the same direction. I called to him, and asked him what he thought of yonder strip, and whether he could make out anything in it distinctly. He answered that water had all at once appeared there; that he saw the motion of the waves, and tall palms and other trees bending up and down over them, as if tossed by a strong wind. An Arab was at my side, with his face muffled up in his burnous; I roused his attention, and pointed to the object of our inquiry. 'Mashallah!' cried the old man, with a face as if he had seen a ghost, and stared with all his might across the desert.

"All the other Arabs of the party evinced no less emotion; and our interpreter called out to us, that what we saw was the evil spirit of the desert, that led travellers astray, luring them farther and farther into the heart of the waste, ever retreating before them as they pursued it, and not finally disappearing till its deluded victims had irrecoverably lost themselves in the pathless sands. This, then, was the mirage. My companion galloped towards it, and we followed him, though the Arabs tried to prevent us, and ere long I could with my own eyes discern something of this strange phenomenon. It was, as my friend reported, a broad sheet of water, with fresh green trees along its banks; and yet there was nothing actually before us but parched yellow sand. The apparition occasioned us all very uncomfortable feelings, and yet we congratulated ourselves in having seen for once the desert wonder.

"The phenomenon really deserves the name the Arabs give it, of *Goblin of the Desert*; an evil spirit that beguiles the wanderer from the safe path, and mocks him with a false show of what his heated brain paints in glowing colours. Whence comes it that this illusion at first fills with uneasiness—I might even say with dismay—those even who ascribe its existence to natural causes? On a spot where the bare sands spread out for hundreds of miles, where there is neither tree nor shrub, nor a trace of water, there suddenly appeared before us groups of tall trees, proudly girdling the running stream, on whose waves we saw the sunbeams dancing. Hills clad in pleasant green rose before us and vanished; small houses, and towns with high walls and ramparts, were visible among the trees, whose tall boles swayed to and fro in the wind like reeds.

"Far as we rode in the direction of the apparition, we never came any nearer to it; the

whole seemed to recoil step by step with our advance. We halted, and remained long in contemplation of the magic scene, until whatever was unpleasant in its strangeness ceased by degrees to affect us. Never had I seen any landscape so vivid as this seeming one, never water so bright, or trees so softly green, so tall and stately. Everything seemed far more charming there than in the real world; and so strongly did we feel this attraction that, although we were not driven by thirst to seek for water where water there was none, still we would willingly have followed on and on after the phantom; and thus we could well perceive how the despairing wanderer, who with burning eyes thinks he gazes on water and human dwellings, will struggle onward to his last gasp to reach them, until his fearful, lonely doom befalls him.




TRAVELLERS AND THE MIRROR

"We returned slowly to our Arabs, who had not stirred from the spot where we left them. Looking back once more into the desert, we saw the apparition gradually becoming fainter, until at last it melted away into a dim land, not unlike a thin mist sweeping over the face of a field (*Hochblünder*). It was probably this phenomenon, which is beheld as well in Hadramaut and Yemen as in the deserts of Egypt, which gave rise to the fable of the Garden of Irem, described in the story of the *Phantom Camel*, in the '*Tales of the Ramad'han*.'"

I cannot part from the Arab superstitions without mentioning one which is of very great antiquity, and which has spread itself widely over the world. I allude to the celebrated ink-mirror of the Arab magicians, in which they see, through the eyes of another, the events of the future and the forms of persons far distant.

The mirror is made as follows:—The magician calls a very young boy, not old enough, according to their ideas, to be tainted with sin, and makes him sit on the ground. The magician sits opposite him, holding the boy's opened right hand in his, and after repeating

prayers, and burning incense, he draws a crossed square on the palm of the hand—thus —writes cabalistic words in all the angles, and pours about a spoonful of ink into the centre. More prayers and suffumigations follow, and the boy is then directed to look closely into the ink. Should he be really pure, and a fit subject for the magic art, he sees a series of figures, always beginning with a man sweeping the ground, and ending with a camp, with the sultan's tent and flag in the centre. These vanish, and the mirror is left clear for any figure which may be invoked.

All parties seem to have the most implicit belief in the proceeding; and though several boys in succession may fail to see anything but the reflection of their own faces, the failure is set down to their bad moral character, and others are tried until one is found who possesses the requisite vision. It is a curious fact that the magician himself never pretends to this inner sight, the sins which he has committed being an effectual hindrance. Educated Europeans have often witnessed this curious ceremony, and have given different accounts of it. With some it has been an utter failure, the boy evidently trying to deceive, and inventing, according to his ability, scenes which are supposed to be represented in the mirror. With others it has been as singular a success, European scenes and persons having been described accurately by the boy, though the greatest care was taken that no clue should be given either to the magician or the boy.

MADAGASCAR.

WE complete the account of African tribes with a brief notice of some of the tribes which inhabit the island of Madagascar. For my information I am chiefly indebted to Ellis's well-known work, and to a valuable paper read by Lieutenant Oliver, R.A., before the Anthropological Society of London, on March 3, 1868.

The name of Madagascar is entirely of European invention, the native name for this great island being Nosindambo, *i.e.* the island of wild hogs. The inhabitants are known by the general name of Malagasy, and they are divided into several tribes. These tribes differ from each other in their colour, mode of dress, and other particulars, and may be roughly divided according to their colour into the fair and the dark tribes, each consisting of four in number, and ranging through almost every shade of skin, from the light olive of the Hovas to the black tribes of the south. According to Ellis, the entire population is only three millions, while Lieutenant Oliver, who gives the approximate numbers of each tribe, estimates them at five millions.

The origin of the Malagasy is rather obscure, and, although so close to the continent of Africa, they have scarcely anything in common with the African races. The hypothesis which has been generally accepted is that they are of Malay origin, their ancestors having been in all probability blown out to sea in their canoes, and eventually landed on the island. That they are not of African origin has been argued from several points, while they have many habits belonging to the oceanic race. For example, although they are so close to Africa, they have never adopted the skin dresses which are generally found throughout the savage races of the continent, but, on the contrary, make use of the hibiscus bark beaten out exactly after the fashion of the Polynesians.

"It is evident," writes Lieutenant Oliver, "that the Malagasy have never deteriorated from any original condition of civilization, for there are no relics of primæval civilization to be found in the country. Yet the Malagasy seem to have considerably advanced themselves in the art of building houses, and originating elaborate fortifications, which they have themselves modified to suit their offensive and defensive weapons, previous to any known intercourse with civilized people. They had domesticated oxen, and pigs,

and made advances in the cultivation of rice, yams, &c.; but whether by their own unaided intellect, or by external example, we cannot say."

With regard to the domestication of cattle, they themselves refer it to a very recent date, and even state that the use of beef was accidentally discovered during the last century. A chief named Rabiby was superintending the planting of his rice, when he noticed that one of his men was remarkable for his increase in strength and corpulence, and interrogated him on the subject. The man told him that some time previously he happened to kill a bullock, and had the curiosity to cook some of the meat. Finding it to be remarkably good, he continued to kill and eat, and so improved his bodily condition. Rabiby very wisely tried the experiment for himself, and, finding it successful, had a bullock killed, and gave a feast to his companions. The general impression was so favourable that he gave orders for building folds in which the cattle might be collected, and he further extended the native diet by the flesh of the wild hog. The original folds built by his orders are still in existence.

Chief among the Malagasy are the Hova tribe, who have gradually extended themselves over a considerable portion of the island, and are now virtually its masters. They are the lightest in colour of all the tribes, and have more of the Spanish than the negro expression. The hair is black, long, and abundant, and is worn in several fashions. The men usually cut the hair rather short, and arrange it over the forehead and temples much after the style that was prevalent in the days of the Regency. The women spend much time over their hair, sometimes frizzing it out until they remind the spectator of the Fijl race, and sometimes plaiting it into an infinity of braids, and tying them in small knots or bunches all over the head.

Their dress has something of the Abyssinian type. Poor people wear little except a cloth twisted round their loins, while the more wealthy wear a shirt covered with a mantle called a lamba. This article of apparel is disposed as variously as the Abyssinian's tobe. The Hovas are distinguished by having their lambas edged with a border of five broad stripes.

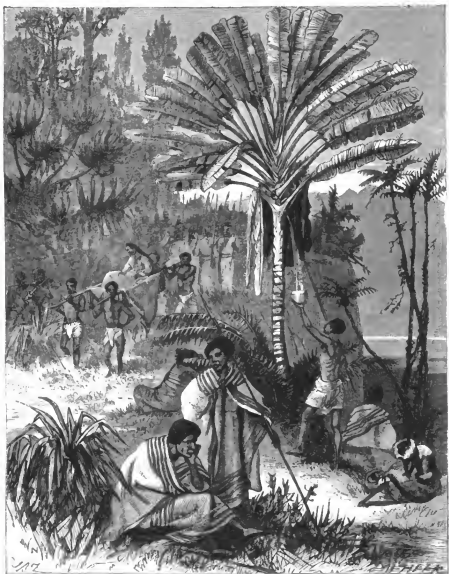
Their houses, to which allusion has already been made, are formed exclusively of vegetable materials. The walls are formed by driving rows of posts into the ground at unequal distances, and filling up the spaces with the strong leaf-stalks of the "traveller's tree." Each leaf-stalk is about ten feet in length, and they are fixed in their places by flat laths. The roof is thatched with the broad leaves of the same tree, tied firmly on the very steep rafters. The eaves project well beyond the walls, so as to form a verandah round the house, under which benches are placed. The floor is covered with a sort of boarding made of the traveller's tree. The bark is stripped off and beaten flat, so as to form boards of twenty feet or so in length, and fifteen inches in width. These boards are laid on the floor, and, although they are not nailed, they keep their places firmly.

This traveller's tree is one of the most useful plants in Madagascar. It is a sort of palm, and its broad leaves, beside supplying thatch and walls for the houses, furnish a copious supply of fresh water. The water is found in the hollow formed by the manner in which the base of the leaf-stem embraces the trunk from which it springs, and the liquid is obtained by piercing the leaf-stem with a spear. A full quart of water is obtained from each leaf, and it is so pure that the natives will rather walk a little distance to a traveller's tree, than supply themselves with water from a stream at their feet.

The Malagasy have some knowledge of musical sounds, and have invented some instruments which are far superior to those of the African tribes. One of the best is the remarkable violin which is shown in the illustration on page 774. It is played with a bow equally rude in character, and, although the sounds which it produces are not particularly harmonious to English ears, they are at all events quite as agreeable as those produced by the stringed instruments of China, Japan, or even Turkey.

Slavery exists among the Malagasy, but is not of a very severe character, and may possibly, through the exertions of the missionaries, become extinguished altogether. The slaves do all the hard work of the place, which is really not very hard, and, as they take plenty of time over everything that they do, their work would be thought very light by an ordinary English labourer. Drawing water is perhaps the hardest labour the

female slaves undergo, and it is not such very hard work after all. They draw the water by means of cows' horns tied to ropes, and pour it into ingenious pails made of bamboo.



TRAVELLING IN MADAGASCAR

The hardest work which the men do is acting as bearer to their master's hammock or litter, and, as the roads often lie through uncleared forests, and are very rough and

rocky, they have a fatiguing task. These litters are very convenient, and are covered with a roof to shield the occupant from the sun. They are rather unwieldy, and sometimes as many as twenty or thirty men are attached to each litter, some bearing the poles on their shoulders, and others dragging it by ropes, while the whole proceedings are directed by a superintendent.

Within the last few years, Christianity has made wonderful progress among the Malagasy, although at first missionaries were driven out, and the native converts put to death with frightful tortures.

The old superstitions, however, still remain, but they are of a more harmless character than is generally the case with the superstitions of a people who are only beginning to emerge out of the savage state. All reptiles, especially snakes, are regarded with great veneration. Whether any of the serpents are poisonous is not clearly ascertained, though the natives deny that venomous snakes are found on the island. Be this as it may, they never kill a snake, and, even if a large serpent should come into their house, they merely guide it through the doorway with sticks, telling it to go away.

They do not appear to possess idols, though Mr. Ellis found certain objects to which a sort of worship was paid. These were simply "pieces of wood about nine feet high, not square and smooth at the base, but spreading into two or three branches at about five feet from the ground, and gradually tapering to a point." Near them was a large basaltic stone, about five feet high, and of its natural prismatic form, and near it was another stone, smooth and rounded, and about as large as a man's head. The natives said that blood was poured on one stone, and fat burned on the other, but they were very averse to any conversation on the subject, and very probably did not tell the truth.

Some of their domestic superstitions—if we use such a term—are rather curious. Mr. Ellis had noticed that on several occasions a spot of white paint had been placed on the forehead, or a white circle drawn round the eye. One morning, he found these marks adorning nearly the whole of his bearers. On inquiring into the cause of this decoration, he found that it was a charm to avert the consequences of bad dreams. As, however, they had par-

taken copiously of beef on the preceding evening, the cause of the bad dreams was clearly more material than spiritual.

Partly connected with their superstitious ideas is the existence of a distinct class, the Zanakamboay. They are hereditary blacksmiths, and are exempt from forced labour except in their own line, so that, as Lieutenant Oliver writes, they will make a spade, but cannot be compelled to use it. They have the right of carrying deceased kings to the grave, and building monuments over them. They are very proud, and behave most arrogantly to other clans, refusing to associate with them, to eat with them, or even to lend them any article to be defiled by the touch of plebeian hands. As they will not even condescend to the ordinary labour of their countrymen, and think that even to build a house is a degradation, they are very poor; as they refuse to associate with others, they are very ignorant, but they console themselves for their inferiority in wealth and learning by constantly dwelling on their enormous superiority in rank.



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